

2015 number 6



pentagram

Lectorium Rosicrucianum



Seeking new shores of life for the soul

pentagram



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Renewal is the key word, or it should be, for the spiritually striving human being.

Every day the Rosicrucian works on building the soul, inspired by the immeasurable Eternal breath that he knows to be active within him.

And if he ever looks back at the results, it is to better attune his manner of working and not to go back to the past anymore than he wants to reach a definite goal in the future.

It is the heartbeat of the moment - the eternal now - from which the Rosicrucian derives the driving force of his action and it is to the Eternal One that he dedicates the outcome of his labour. What matters is renewal, irrespective of the achievement, regardless of the personal - and this requires inspiration. It is this spiritual inspiration, which lifts us above our self.

Inspiration is a spiritual inflow that becomes reality when it goes hand in hand with personal suitability and that is an acquired quality. The inspiration always comes as a gift from above and we have to work towards it from below upward.

As such the new **Pentagram** is the result of such an on-going influx. The source is the force field of the School of the Rosycross and the quality of its pupils determines the strength and the value of its content and gives it the corresponding form.

That is why this first editorial page is at the same time a call of renewal: send us your contributions, your inspired thoughts, articles or reflections. Email them to: info@rozekruispers.nl. Let us share the current work of the spiritual school with the world more than ever before, so that also in this form the new reborn soul is clearly perceptible and the texts of **Pentagram** magazine will be the outcome of a living Rosycross, worldwide.

Pentagram started in 1979 and this 280th publication marks two substantial changes: first we shall now publish Pentagram as a quarterly magazine and secondly also a digital version will be ready this year, suitable for computers, tablets and smartphones.

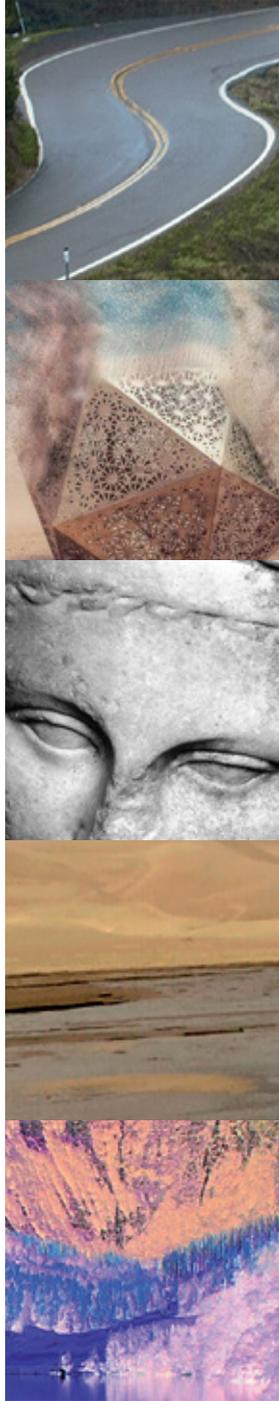


Cover

For all 'new shores' lie on the horizon. There is an element of alienation in the pictures of Cindy Patrick, which aptly expresses the search for this special, initially alienating reality of consciousness.

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<http://www.cindypatrick.com>

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Working with resistance





The lucid thinking of Jan van Rijckenborgh and Catharose de Petri and their great love for humanity brought them together to found a modern school for the development of consciousness, the Lectorium Rosicrucianum. They did so in the firm conviction that the elimination of the lack of knowledge about the background of human existence is a key factor in alleviating the worlds' suffering.



The seat of the soul

At the dawn of the fourth day, Christian Rosycross receives some new golden Garments as well as the adornment of the Golden Fleece, evidence that the new ether vesture has positively affected the heart sanctuary and that a new radiation and new activity now shine forth from the sternum. And because heart and head are closely linked, when the spirit enters the seven brain cavities the heart is sure to follow. And just as the soul-power opens the new thinking via the heart, the heart will now begin to work in a new way because of what it receives through this new way of thinking.

These are aspects of the commencing transfiguration by which the human heart and head both undergo a distinct change. In the story of the alchemical wedding, the group that goes through this wonderful process with C. R. C. arrives at a spiral staircase with 365 steps. In the number three hundred and sixty five, we recognize a mercury number, a value that in this case engenders a mercury-force, a mercury activity, a mercury-state. Mercury is known as the messenger of the Gods, and brings into one's life the necessity to unite the revealed spirit-radiations with the soul and thereby bring them into manifestation in and through the body. When something essential is opened in a human being, the soul-power unites

with the spirit-power, that is, provided this openness arises through the actual practice of a gnostic pupilship. Mercury, then, has always been the great symbol of initiation: the moon sign represents the soul; the sun sign represents the spirit, the sign of the cross represents matter. A way through matter as a way-of-the-cross, in complete self-surrender; the way of the cross to I-less-ness; the way of John: 'not I, but the other in me - He must increase and I must decrease.'

Whoever goes this path wins the soul and thereby the spirit; and whoever receives something of the soul on this path will certainly receive the spirit. To bring this about they undergo the test of the seven weights. The weights are set in place.

*From his earliest work to his last conferences, J. van Rijckenborgh again and again drew attention to the *Alchemical Wedding of Christian Rosycross, anno 1459*, pointing out the many hidden layers encrypted in the text.*

The living water touches the seven nuclei of consciousness in the head. So, whoever goes this path drinks of this water, lives and works out of it, and thus his transfiguration begins immediately: the mercury phase commences. A phase that has three aspects: spirit, soul and body, or rather: soul, spirit and body, for in this procedure the soul must arise first. The bride anticipates the bridegroom. When soul, spirit and body are thus inclined to each other, and the candidate forms a living symbol of Mercury, then the royal spiral staircase is unlocked. The staircase forms a direct and exclusive connection between the head and the heart, where at a given moment the heart chakra is the open door.

Before continuing, it is worth pointing out that in its normal state, the human consciousness resides both in the heart and in the head, and so the flame of consciousness burns both in the heart as well as in the head. However, in our nature-born state there is a division between these two aspects of our consciousness. There is no question of unity. The consideration or intent of the heart is mostly completely different to that of the head, and because the heart correlates so directly with the astral body, the heart usually predominates powerfully over the head, for which reason one often says 'what the heart does not want, does not enter the head.' In the natural state, the astral factor of the heart, the animating factor, plays the dominant role, granting the consciousness-flame in the head - the astral fluid in the seven brain cavities - only its well-known intellectual role. The various brain centres wholly attune to the status quo and one crystallizes

to the extent that a change is all but impossible, even though one is engulfed with pain, misery and grief. It is because the intellect knows no other way! Thus man, as a nature-born soul, wends his way through life, until the end comes.

The start of the fourth day of the alchemical wedding is a wholly different matter. Prior to this event, there can be no real mercury-manifestation. The heart's desire-nature has totally desecrated the head-sanctuary as a temple, and the mind focuses exclusively on self-maintenance and the struggle for existence. When the hermetic philosophy designates man as animal-man, that is to say, as an animated creature and not much more, it is perfectly correct. But in the state-of-being highlighted in our text the heart has completely nullified its blood-debt to the head, through the self-sacrifice of all earthly desire.

The radiations of the candidate's heart have thus opened the central heart of his microcosm with its seven rays. The soul-state is renewed, a new astral cloud spreads out in the respiration-field and the spirit is now able to light the seven candles in the head-sanctuary. The way upwards is broken open by the blood-sacrifice, and behold, a new door opens and there is now an equilibrium between heart and head, between soul and spirit. What is in the head is now also in the heart, and what is in the heart is also in the uppermost sanctuary, and the fabled Golden Fleece is the evidence of this process.

The maiden Alchimia now allows the candidate to follow her on the new way upwards via the serpent-fire. She leads them up the steps. Finally, they arrive

at the top, under a painted dome, where sixty richly clothed maidens receive them. The pineal centre, the seat of the highest candlestick, is comparable with a rose or a lotus with sixty petals, so we can understand what our text wants to make clear to us. It describes the candidate's first meeting with the king and queen, and a confrontation with all the aspects and forces of his, her consciousness. The soul

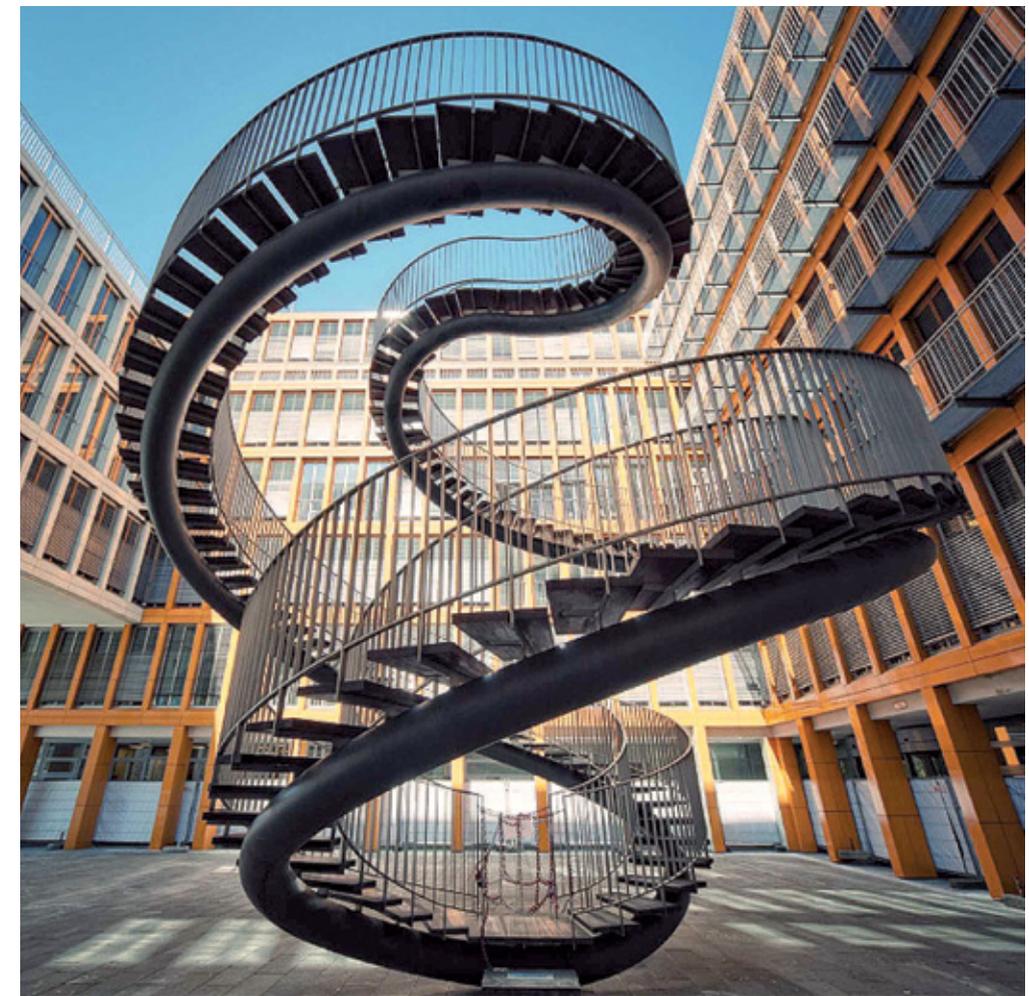
The Golden Fleece: the sign that the new values of the heart now also influence the mind



takes the seat assigned to her by divine ordinance. She is seated in the topmost sanctuary, beside the king, beside the spirit. For the candidate, this great victory for the soul is of immeasurable importance. The soul ascends from the heart to the seven brain cavities with the radiations of the seven-spirit, and when soul and spirit unite in this way the control over life is total and the candidate takes leave of all the grief-causing inner division. That is why C.R.C. cries out in jubilation: 'Had not the queen so kindly warned me on the

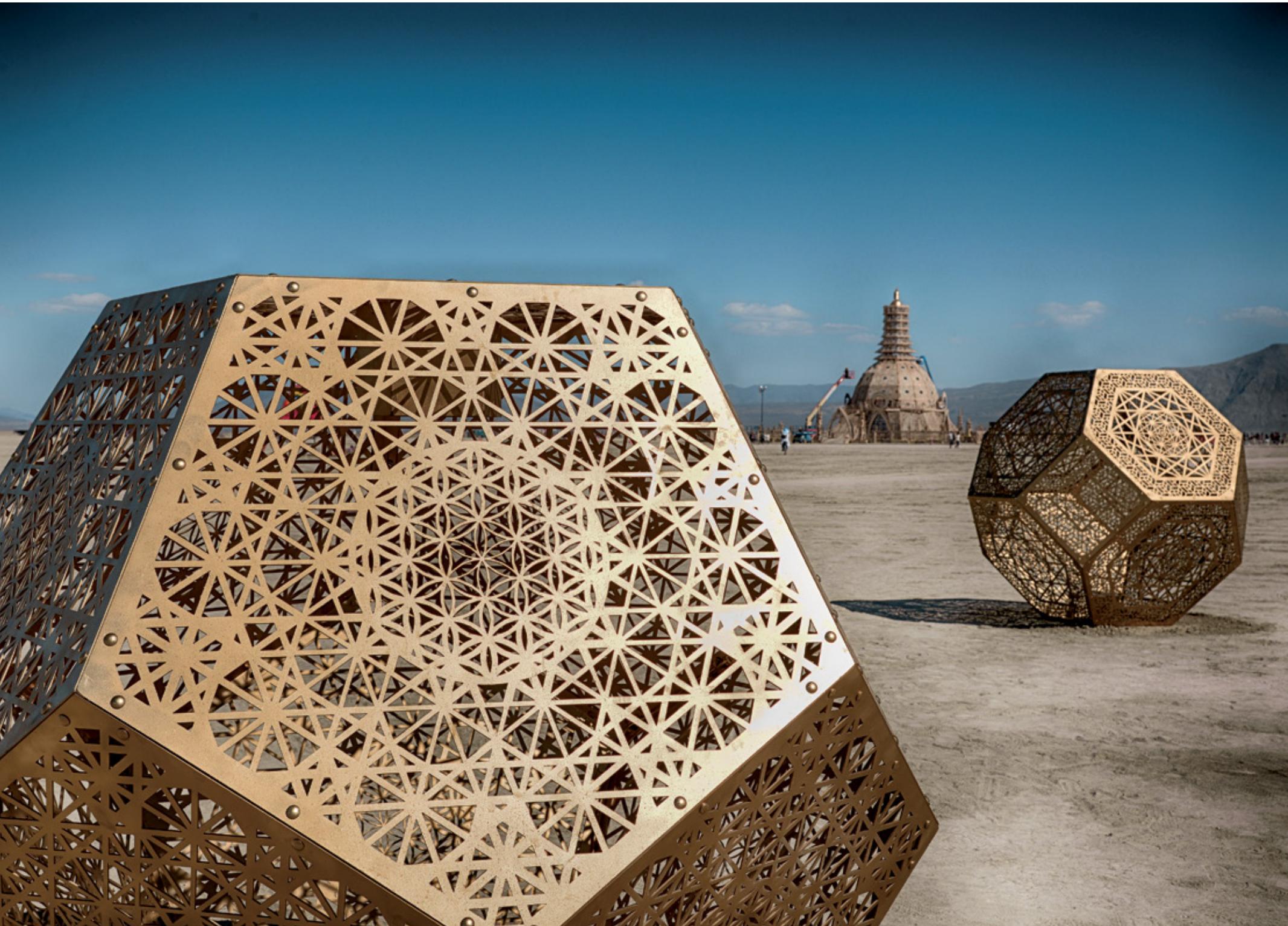
previous day, I would have gone beyond myself and taken this ineffable glory for heaven; for besides the room glittering with pure gold and precious stones, the queen's robe was so radiant that I was unable to look upon her.' Finally, it is perhaps worthwhile to cast more light on a few of the details discussed, to make these possibly abstract items more concrete.

Firstly then, a word about the spiral staircase to the royal wedding hall. These stairs represent a connection between the heart chakra and the chakra corresponding with the pineal gland.



When the soul is born, with the candelabra in balance and the candles burning in unison, an actual, tangible etheric thread of light develops between heart and head, which is free of every anatomical aspect. This connection forms itself out of reflecting-ether and light-ether, that is to say is mental and sensorial, and it has a distinctive spiral movement, hence we speak of a spiral staircase.

Secondly, we want to take just one preliminary look in the wedding hall itself, namely the pineal brain section, the seat of the highest manifestation of the spirit that has united with the soul. It is into the pineal brain-section that the microcosmic lipika projects itself, but now the lipika of the world of the living soul-state also does so. And since this possibility was born from the resurrection of the soul, out of the central heart of the microcosm, it is clear why the queen makes such a dazzling impression on C.R.C. 'What I had previously regarded as beautiful, all this was exalted far above, as the stars in the sky.' Indeed! We can now see this clearly before us, and we come to realise that all this is in fact just the beginning! ★



Health

If we are healthy we usually tend to take our health for granted. A healthy constitution does not require any special attention and affords us the liberty and freedom to go about and be occupied with all sorts of activities other than our health.

If we are healthy we usually tend to take our health for granted. A healthy constitution does not require any special attention and affords us the liberty and freedom to go about and be occupied with all sorts of activities other than our health. How different this is for someone who is ill. Unlike health, which offers us the possibility to plan and determine our lives, we are greatly restricted when we are ill. Our mind will then focus almost exclusively on our illness. The complaints and symptoms impose themselves on us. We are forced to give them a good part of our attention. But if they worsen there is hardly any room left, or none, for anything else; it will require all our strength. We will then have to call in the help of others. Even a physician who falls ill is himself usually quite powerless. It is therefore not surprising that physicians and the medical world have made “being ill”, the illness itself, an object of study. Healing in this sense meant the relief or liberation from a disease and was always celebrated as a victory. It gives doctor and patient – and possibly also the pharmacist – the soothing feeling that the riddle has been solved. Although many medical questions have been answered, which is a fantastic feat in itself, we submit that the actual mystery is not why and how we become ill but what the phenomenon of health is all about. The World Health Organization – with ‘health’ as the operative word – has for a long time defined this concept in terms of ‘the absence of illness’. It later adjusted this definition and it now refers to a situation of complete physical, mental and social well-being. It does however not take the matter any further which is very remarkable to say the least.

Health and illness are, in our perception and in our consciousness, generally seen to be in opposition to each other. It will therefore not surprise us that since ancient times there have been two schools of thought in the field of medical science. One school is focused on illness, on its symptoms and on repressing and alleviating them. The other school is focused on the curative forces in nature as well as those within man himself. In the ancient Greek period the school that focused on counteracting illness originated in Knidos, a city situated on the mainland, while the school that focused on self-recovery was situated on the island Kos. Its leader was the well-known doctor Hippocrates. He did not consider himself an opponent of those counteracting illness, but was very much aware of an important factor missing in their approach. For sure one will also have to combat illness in specific cases, particularly in the acute phase, but this merely results in a temporary balance. But it is important to realize that at that

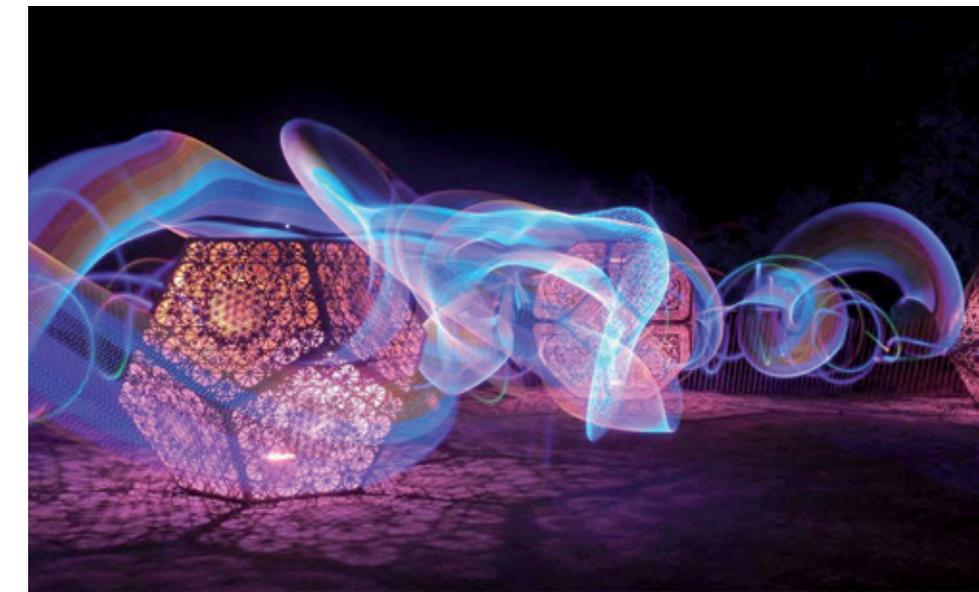
point one has as yet not taken one single step in the direction of health. Those who approach illness with the mind state of having to do battle are heading for an endless series of campaigns. And at a given moment they will become battle-wearied, for victory is impossible. Hippocrates saw illness as an expression of life as we experience it - life as we necessarily undergo it. As the opposite pole of health, illness operates at the other end of the spectrum to correct what appears to go well, but which is imperceptibly out of step. Are we then simply to allow things to run their course, patiently waiting for a possible healing, awaiting the moment when we 'recover' all by ourselves? It is this despairing line of thought that has people attacking illness. And when things then seem to be going the right way and the balance has temporarily been restored both physician and patient may relax and be satisfied. They fail to notice however - or they simply put up with it - the fact that the weapons they used have also caused damage and furthermore that

the problem has only changed location and therefore has not been really solved. Sometimes this becomes clear only much later and often the connection is not made at all. Thus the question remains: Should we then totally stop combatting an illness? Indeed, no. What counts most of all is the protection of our bodies from permanent damage or excess in the same way as we protect the vulnerable plants in our garden against sharp frost, without pampering them. In this vein we should combat illness when required and stimulate health wherever possible. Just as spring keeps itself concealed in the middle of winter, so the fragile blossom is sheltered in its bud as long as it is still freezing. It waits patiently, like the butterfly in its cocoon, until its

time has come. But is it actually 'waiting', or is it on the contrary still 'working' on another level? In the same way health seems to hide when fever is raging. It is not absent however but rather works unnoticed. Its activity is not less, but dissimilar. We are in the habit of placing illness and health in opposition to each other and superficially this does indeed seem logical. Just ask someone who has the flu what he most longs for...! Those who take the time to study illness and health with an open mind will discover that illness is just as much an instrument of the force of life as is health. Illness is always an instrument of the mysterious dynamic force that drives us to reach the higher balance, the true harmony. He who is able to understand this in his own life will approach his illness in a different way. He or she will of course realize that those who are ill indeed suffer, but what's much more important is that he will also understand that there is guidance here as well. The art of healing and of curing oneself is

not just a passive acceptance of the suffering but rather adopting an attitude of 'let yourself be guided'. To be guided is not passively allowing yourself to be carried along, but a very conscious and therefore active attitude. Curing, in the sense of a process that leads to true harmony, cannot be done in passivity. Stagnation means decline and passivity causes resistance. Cooperation is always active, is always a conscious and intelligent activity in a quiet state of mind. Cooperating with such a process also demands that we let go, that we give up what is old and what is of the past. It demands from us a clear insight into the processes of life behind the phenomena and an insight into the purpose that underlies the illness and where it wants to lead us. Those who fall ill often rack their brains with the questions: "Why? Why must this happen to me? What did I do wrong? What should I have done differently?" The answers to these questions lose themselves in the multitude of factors from our past. If, however, we are able to ask the questions: "To what end is

BURNING MAN-FESTIVAL
The pictures show a series of laser-sculptures of HYBYCOZO that one could see last year at the Burning Man-festival in Black Rock Desert (Nevada, US). HYBYCOZO (the 'hyperspace bypass construction zone') is a project that operates on the intersection of science, technology and culture. They receive their inspiration from their favorite book: the 'Hitchhikers Guide to the Galaxy' and their passion is to bring their design, technology and installation-art to the next level. @<https://www.kickstarter.com/projects/hybycozo/hybycozo-the-hyperspace-bypass-constructionzone>



“Those who cure, are always in the right,” says Paracelsus. But also: “The body never lies”

this illness?” and “Where does it want to lead me?” then this affords us other possibilities and opens a new way for us, the road to life.

On this road patience is an important aid. Particularly passionate and hyperactive people often see patience as idleness. But in order to be really patient—right when you are itching to go somewhere but the time hasn’t come yet — then strength and perseverance are required in addition to insight into the process. A real cure cannot tie in with passivity; neither can it find resonance with just fighting the symptoms through mere combat. We often say that our health is our highest good, and rightly so, but when we are confronted with illness we are often seized with fear and reach for our weapons.

Modern western medical science ties in with these fears. In addition it has wholeheartedly accepted that health can be manufactured. The idea behind this mind state is that everything will be solved, everything will be discovered and the human being – separated from God – will rule over life and death.

In contrast we see the dilemmas that stem from this approach piling up. The growth curve of medical know-how is so steep that putting this knowledge into practice threatens to become prohibitively expensive. For the individual practitioner it is impossible to keep up with all this new know-how and so he is more and more forced to

follow fixed guidelines and protocols. It is ironic that, owing to this accumulation of knowledge, the physician is no longer capable or even allowed to think for himself but rather is bound by restrictions. Another dilemma is the fact that acute diseases, the so-called ‘warm’ diseases, have largely been suppressed while the chronic ‘cold’ diseases have increased enormously.

For example nowadays in the Netherlands there are well over five million people chronically ill and in the age group over 75, 80% have at least one chronic illness. It is therefore not surprising that only a few people die a natural death. Friends, it serves a good purpose to list all these points.

As long as we keep judging illness as something that is opposed to health and act accordingly, and as long as we merely suppress and fight illness at the expense of our health, the statistics will continue to show an increase in chronic diseases. How different it could be if we regard health and illness as two sides of one and the same higher vitality, one and the same higher force of light that wants to enlighten our path through life - that wants to illuminate the way for us.

As long as we ignore these guiding lights and push them aside, this force will keep conjuring up new indications, new experiences and also new forms of illness from an inexhaustible arsenal in order to prove that the Light is the final Eternity and that the Light, the Spirit, will never abandon us.

And from this viewpoint we understand that the idea that life can be manufactured stems from the arrogant pride of a center of intelligence that is damaged and poisoned because it is cut off, because it presumes that it is capable to do everything, to understand everything all by itself, without the Spirit.

What could be behind this pride? It can only be fear, the fear of losing everything, the fear of being dependent, the fear of not being in control. But actually it is our lack of real knowledge that propels us in the wrong direction.

The first and most important step on the path is therefore the recognition of this pathetic state, that we are ignorant - that we have hopelessly gone astray and that we are fundamentally ill.

Famous physicians like Hippocrates and Paracelsus have always known and propagated that a real cure is possible only if we positively accept that we are ill.

Positive acceptance is an active intelligent attitude to life. It is ‘looking up to the mountain top from whence help will come’, looking longingly to the domain of the life-giving spirit.

When a pupil in this Spirit-oriented soul state is aware, then the Master will be there. Then he will have entered the process of ‘being his own master’.

That is the meaning of Paracelsus’ words with which we may be familiar: “Nobody who is his own master will become the slave of someone else.” As said earlier, the legendary Hippocrates was well acquainted with this specific factor that was lacking in the prevailing attitude to health.

He knew that only the Spirit is able to bring real health. Just as the heat of a fever causes numerous acute diseases to decrease in intensity, so in the same way is the Spirit’s fire a medicine of the highest order.

The story goes that Hippocrates once freed a town from pestilence by starting fires in which the dead persons and their belongings were incinerated.

He had discovered incidentally that the people who worked near the fires in the forges were spared from the pestilence as a consequence.

The great ones in spirit have always spoken to their followers in parables. They knew and recognized the great law of cohesion upon which everything rests. A receptive and alert soul thus receives the fluid of truth, and as a result the pupil is eager to research ever deeper and to look for that highest authority, the power of the Spirit that brings everything into existence, that nourishes, warms and cures.

Karl von Eckartshausen called this alert soul ‘the inner man’, a person who is forever-young, a noble one, the primordial image of Being and the example for the external human being.

It is impossible to speak with absolute knowledge about the Power of the Spirit, the Spirit’s healing fire that brings salvation.

That is the reason why libraries have been filled with books about healing with the help of the forces of our earthly nature, but very little is known about healing with the forces of the divine Nature.

Paracelsus stated that the medical science of the true life is based on a new birth which liberates the human being from the circular course of birth and death. Our earthly nature does not serve that purpose and was never intended for it. Paracelsus concludes therefore that there is no place on earth where the heavenly art of healing finds fertile soil. Only in a new body can the Word do its Work in us and will it have any effect here on earth. He therefore urged his listeners to apply the heavenly medical science with more regard and love than the world-oriented science.

Paracelsus was a most practical and concrete person, as is shown in his writings. “Those who cure, are always in the right” was one of his winged pronouncements. And also: “The body never lies.”

Concerning this last pronouncement, later thinkers acknowledged that the ‘symptom’ – the phenomenon of illness – is a mathematically sound reflection of what we lack, literally a pointer to what is lacking, not in our body, but in our consciousness. Intuitively we say: “I’m not feeling well.” Those who are world-oriented are trying to recover their familiar natural order, they are aiming at a ‘restoration’... of the old state of affairs.

Those who are Spirit-oriented know that the symptom is there to help us find the Spirit’s higher order, its harmony – and they also realize that this is exactly why they first will have to give up the old order. And whether we are on the first or the last step on the way to this divine harmony is not really relevant.

Health and its assistant ‘illness’ have only one purpose: the complete reunion of body and soul with the Spirit. This is the healing art that is the ultimate cure. Everything else is a large school of development where the intrinsic balance is deliberately kept unstable in order to prevent the ever-

threatening crystallization process. In this school we are never ‘all right’ and there is no lasting peace. We do not reflect there upon the deep significance of health and illness.

There recovery means at most a sense of relief, which must always be temporary.

There, health is a slogan, the real contents of which can only be imagined.

Health, as we’ve said, is an unfathomably profound notion and, together with illness, it is an expression of life itself. It is certainly not a privilege that is reserved for young people.

A dying person can also be, or become party to this process of recovery and ‘heal’ his life, maybe not with respect to the body, but certainly with respect to his immortal soul. Dying is inextricably connected with our temporary life, but in immortal life it no longer needs a spatio-temporal place. In a spirit-soul oriented life relinquishment is a completely natural practise, just like breathing.

We conclude with some words by Master Eckehart about this relinquishment so that we may keep this thought in our hearts: “I declare by God’s eternal truth that God is compelled to pour out all of his power into those who have relinquished themselves to the nethermost level.”

The sacrifice of the words



Deep down in the caves is the area of “no transmission”. There are as yet places on earth that can not be reached by satellites and where there is a true stillness – a real silence. Everywhere people are constantly bombarded by self-generated radiations but in these caves the silence of centuries is still present. It is a bizarre thought that silence has become such a rare commodity.

Everything that is scarce is sought after. Silence has become “hot”. Everywhere retreats are on offer, with the expectation that the outer silent circumstances contribute to making your wish come true: some inner silence in your head. Getting for some moments to the “real me”, your true self. Giving space to the divine other one within you.

Or as Max Heindel¹ observes so poetically: “Silence is an important factor for the growth of the soul. We can and must develop the virtue of silence in ourselves, otherwise our own soul growth will be but poorly”.

There is a safe method for this: stay upright in the commotion of the bat-

tlefields of the world and serve unselfishly because the soul gathers its building materials for its growth in the most difficult circumstances. At the same time build a sanctuary within you, filled with that silent music that always sounds when you serve the soul, a source of elevation and joy far above all the uncertainties of your earthly existence.

And Max Heindel continues: “When we have this “living church” within us, then we are truly “living temples”. Then our attention is not necessarily entirely directed at worldly matters, we can at every moment retreat into that spiritual home not made by hands, and refresh ourselves in the harmony that reigns there. We can do this several times a day and by doing so constantly restore the

harmony that is continually disturbed by the inevitable clashes in our daily life. Hear this timeless truth from a hundred years ago: build a sanctuary deep-down within you and thus create the opportunity to receive something of a much higher order. If you can really be silent you have gold in your hands because silence is the door to a higher dimension. This is silence as a mystery, the holy silence, the creative silence.

Ogdoade and Enneade

This silence of a higher order goes far above words as we read in the Nag Hammadi text on the Ogdoade and the Enneade. It says there ‘that hymns are sung in silence in honour of the One’.

In the symposium text on “The wisdom of Hermes”, Jean-Pierre Mahé² in his

contribution on ‘The Hermetic hymn: a preparation for silence,’ wonders what the reason for this hymn could be? And then continues: “It is all about the sacrifice of the words”.

“A sacrifice of our words first requires the development of our heart and soul, - a focused effort of all our spiritual powers that will then speed towards the divine transcendence.

In his effort the spirit is so at one with the words of its prayer that his exaltation is the essence of its sacrifice and resounds: “We thank You, with all our soul and all our heart attuned to You”. Every attempt to praise the divine transcendence encounters the inability to express it in words. It is difficult to imagine God in any case but even if someone could he would still be unable to describe it. That is why the words offers themselves up in order to call up “the unspeakable, the unsayable, which can only be voiced in silence”.

Therefore the sacrifice of the words reaches its climax in the silent prayer. In the Ogdoade and the Enneade this exercise is played out before our eyes but the

pupil there does not succeed and it takes quite a number of fruitless attempts before he is able “to silently sing a hymn”. Jean-Pierre Mahé continues by stating: “It is the putting into words of a condition in which we are powerless to express Gods unspeakable greatness but in which we permit ourselves to be offered up into the Silence. This Silence is not the absence of noise but rather a silent prayer. It is not emptiness or loss of consciousness but a concentration of thought based on a very intense perception of Being - of a submersion in the invisible”.

He who will sacrifice all his words - he who practices being truly silent, truly he has gold in his hands. ☉

A sacrifice of words requires the development of our heart and soul, a focused effort of all our spiritual powers

Footnotes

1. Heindel, M. *Gleanings of a mystic*, Haarlem 1934
2. Symposium Proceedings – *The wisdom of Hermes*. Haarlem 2012

What one doesn't speak of



The eternal reality of the 'Immovable Kingdom' cannot be described. In the world of dialectics there is no form, no sound, no colour, no feeling, and no thought whatsoever that can be compared with it. The eternal truth can never be told in its entirety. It cannot be passed on from mouth to ear, nor can any pen describe it. That is absolutely impossible, even for the highest initiate.¹

When he gives this some thought, a seeker after the truth finds himself confronted with some pressing questions: is one thus doomed to keep quiet about the eternal truth or must one never mind how inadequately one is able to explain it? In other words, if we want to share that which touches us to the core, is it better to keep silent or to speak, no matter how inadequate? Speaking and keeping silent maintain a complex and paradoxical relationship. It is in a 'revealing silence' that they are often in total agreement. Yet it seems that as soon as words are used that they no longer understand each other. It is just as paradoxical that the secular and the holy language are both filled with admonishments about keeping quiet and practising silence. Moreover in libraries from whatever tradition, numerous texts sing the praise about keeping silent, while in a roundabout way it is said how useless words actually are. Both the ancient and the present culture are known for their extreme verbiage, sometimes profane sometimes holy, but still they are only words - as if we couldn't exist without them, or be less without them.

Teaspoon

However, how can people - when they are recovered from their encounter with the Light - ever avoid expressing themselves about this event in words? Maybe they are hesitant words, fumbling and searching, in a broad encircling movement around the mystery. Or they may be ecstatic and big words, as if sourced directly from the godhead. Anyway, how and in which manner it may be, seekers after the truth show the urge of writing or speaking about It. 'The messenger tries to present the entire ocean in a bottle to the world,' as Inayat Khan points out the impossibility of this task.² Just as Church

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Father Augustine was given this lesson by a child, which admonished him that one could more quickly empty the sea into a hole on the beach with a teaspoon than that Augustine could describe the characteristics of the godhead by means of his words. In any case, anyone who wants to make an effort to speak about the Essentiality runs headlong into a wall: words that do not suffice, language that makes one grind one's teeth; epitaphs that are inadequate. In other words: the more words, the less they seem to tell us. Do we thus with our words knock in vain at the gate of the unspeakable? Will there ever be an answer to our questions of existence? Is there, to use a metaphor, still a place for the Other One in the tavern of languages? Or is the holy language already so well kneaded and leavened that we keep on tasting 'It' therein any which way – even if need be in the white space between the lines. In no other way can we after all understand, 'that the lost word arises behind the method, behind the holy language, behind the philosophical awakening?'³ Even though it doesn't matter to be blind while seeing, not being able

to read into its depth and to intuitively understand it when it is said: 'Do read, but be aware, it doesn't say what it says'⁴. Or does it say so much more than what was written down? What is therefore necessary before words can become opening keys, and show that all the talk about what really IS, must always be vague and vain, as the ancient writer of Ecclesiastes stated in the Old Testament? We are helped here by the author Emily Dickinson, who with great common sense spoke: 'I found the words to every thought, I ever had – but One'. Did she then have knowledge of the One thought for which her language didn't have words, but of which she nevertheless, as it was before verbal texts existed, still found expression somewhere within herself? But is a thought without words actually possible? Can we really think without language? And can we on the other hand let 'the spirit' speak via dead letters? Not literally no, but possibly as an intuitive suggestion from a divine perception – an experience – a memorable occasion? Is it then nevertheless possible to step into a language outside our language? Is there then for the

unspeakable a new, original, silent and wordless language possible? A language, which resonates in us in front and behind, below and above, between and beyond the language? And how then can we learn to speak that language? Or do we know it already? Did we just simply forget it? The forgotten word according to J. van Rijckenborgh is a state of being. Do we just simply have to remember that language? Is it our true mother tongue, the language spoken in the Father's house? Time and again and page after page Master Eckhart 'keeps on writing because I want to keep silent about God'. And Lao Zu devotes 81 verses to a Tao which he declares already in verse 1 to be unutterable. And the poet Rilke states: 'Ich glaube an Alles noch nie Gesagte' (I believe in everything that can never be said).

In seeming contradiction, mankind of all times and places, did deploy his language to approach and name the holy. Undaunted and indefatigable, he chased his deepest longings, looking for the true word of God, trying to pronounce, though knowing better, what is surely nearer than hands and feet yet still not of this world.

Ladder

However thin the line between a dead and a living language, and even though we might lose and destroy that to which we wish to give words, we are not able – against the advice of the philosopher Wittgenstein – to keep silent about that which one cannot speak of. Without being able to express it till the end ... the seeking human being cannot stay silent. After all, this human being is a giver of meaning who wants to pour the un-sayable into language, as the invisible white light in a prism may be split into visible colours. When it works, his words become bridges of stepping-stones whereupon other temporal beings may connect with eternity without sinking or drowning. Do we otherwise walk in silence, without

words or road signs or a compass, lost on the spiritual path? It always remains on the sword's edge: speaking on the edge of silence, and vice versa. And of course it still remains only a bridge, a stepping-stone, a compass or a signpost. Ultimately we must throw away this ladder of words to which we clung in our search for our way upward, as if we were returning to ante creation, to word-and namelessness. Words and colours dissolve and join together again into the invisible light. 'The eternal truth can ... never be pronounced in its entirety. It cannot be shared by word of mouth. Also, no pen can describe it. That is completely impossible, even for the highest initiate. There is only one possibility, namely this one: that the human being finds the answer to his distressing and oppressive questions of existence in the sanctuary of his own heart, in the most inner depths of the divine touch, when the delusion of his I has withered'⁵. After all our vain and fruitless efforts to pronounce It, we gradually or maybe instantly, know that our desire to speak must change to keeping silent in order to free the way for His will to speak.

And there, in and through and also past the dispossessed I, the word of God sounds forth in all languages: in the one of the silence and in speaking, in the language of the emptiness and of the fullness, in the one of action and of non-action. There the 'fallen out from the One' comes home again 'into the One'. Because it cannot be otherwise. Because it must be so. After all it never ever will be silent. ☸

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The deception



At a Rosycross Foundation symposium held in Bruges, Belgium, and Groningen, the Netherlands in 2014, there were two presentations given under the title: How is a sustainable 'holy' earth yet possible? The speakers addressed such questions as "How can we consciously change our ways so that we live to experience a sustainable planet, a 'holy earth?' 'How does surrender to the deepest self go together with a surrender to an untainted cosmic order?'"

HOW GOLD, SILVER AND MONEY TURN THE ESSENTIAL VALUES
UPSIDE DOWN AND SO WORK NOT FOR BUT AGAINST MAN



MONEY, ARCHONS
AND AEONS

There is no better example to illustrate the profound insight of the ancient Gnostics of how the world and the ruling energies and powers work, than the essence and the system of our monetary economy. In several symposia by the Rosycross Foundation, Ad Broere and Frans Spakman unravelled this remarkable relation.

AD BROERE

The deception of mankind

T

The present day monetary system works to the 'advantage' of a few. For the majority of people it chiefly forms an enormous impediment to obtain a decent existence. Therefore the question why there is a monetary system that works against the people, instead of promoting the welfare for all, is a logical one. In the first instance, part of an answer to this question may be found in the period in which the monetary system as we now have it originated. To be exact, in the seventeenth and eighteenth century, the era of kings and nobility who borrowed money from the bankers to wage their costly wars and to finance their often-extravagant lifestyle. This money often levied a hefty interest and the ruler's subjects were given as security for the compliance for their obligations. These obligations were then met out of the taxes that were imposed on these very same subjects...

Often banker and tax collector were the selfsame person. So without dealing with the 'fuss' around their borrowed money, the rulers and their retinue always had access to ample means, thanks to the bankers who did their dirty work and were liberally rewarded for it. A re-

ward that they received via the taxation of the subjects.

Banker's elite

In the period of the beginning of banking some families amassed enormous fortunes. How they did that was of no interest to the ruling powers. Also, the money they lent was only partly covered by gold and silver. Fractional banking was born and the most prominent founder of this, Mayer Amschel Bauer, who changed the family name into Rothschild, made the well-known, and by many still not understood statement: 'Give me the power over the money of a nation and it's all the same to me who makes its laws.' Because kings and nobility were not capable of redeeming their ever-growing mountain of debts, their burden of accumulated interest increased steadily. Thus the rulers came more and more into the clutches of the bankers who from behind the scenes steadily increased their influence in matters of state. So much power in fact that, as the mother of the five Rothschild's stated: 'There is no war waged if not in accordance with the will and interest of my sons'. These sons indeed completely

controlled the finances of Europe in the eighteenth and nineteenth century. Out of the first generation of bankers grew a banking elite. And this often also in a literal sense because a majority were elevated into the nobility. The influence of this banker's elite is still noticeable in the present day, be it that this influence is invisible because it is practised behind the scenes, despite all efforts to reform and nationalize the central banks.*

A jar in Egypt

How is it possible that a relatively small number of people were able to exert so much influence over practically all people in the entire world through the medium of money? To give an answer to this I must regress far back in time, to the fourth century A.D. In that period the roman church definitely established its power. People

who followed a different persuasion were persecuted and murdered. Writings and testaments that were not agreeable to the Church of Rome were forbidden. The dogma that the connection between man and God could only take place via the roman church and its clergy was at that time strongly anchored in its subjects. It is likely that we would not have learned much about the existence of otherwise oriented writings wherein humanity was informed about the force that we carry within us to live freely and completely independently of all authority, if a farmer in 1945 in Nag Hammadi (Egypt) had not struck an enormous stone jug while digging up soil in an old cemetery. In 1975 this farmer, Muhammad, told his story to Professor Quispel, at that time professor in Utrecht:

'In December of 1945 I found a jug near mount Hamra Dun. Around six in the morning when I went to work I found this jug. After I found it, I got the hunch that there was something inside it. So I kept the jug and because it was cold that morning I decided to leave it behind and to retrieve it later to see what was inside it. Actually I returned that same day and smashed the jug into pieces. At first I was a little scared to do this because of what could be inside – a jinn, an evil spirit? It was only after I had smashed the pot into pieces that I discovered that there were books with stories inside. I decided to fetch my friends and tell them about it. There were seven of us and we immediately realized that it had something to do with Christians. And we agreed that it actually had no value for us – for us it was completely worthless. So I brought it to the spiritual leader here and he said that we could really do nothing with it. For us it was just junk. So I took it home. Some books I burned and some others I did try to sell.'

Archons

Once the texts began to arrive piecemeal in the western world, they caused

quite a sensation among scientists. They turned out to be manuscripts of ancient and lost texts from the first centuries A.D. In 1977 a complete translation of the 52 texts appeared in English, followed in 1988 by the better publication known as The Nag Hammadi Library, which can be found on the Internet.

In many of these manuscripts archons are mentioned. The word archon comes from the Greek archontoi, which means rulers. These rulers, the archons, keep mankind imprisoned in slavery. One can read about this, among others, in the Gospel of Philip and in the Secret Book of John. Both manuscripts are part of the texts found at Nag Hammadi.

Below follow two fragments on these archons from the Nag Hammadi texts.

From the Gospel according to Philip (13-14): "The rulers wanted to fool people, since they saw that people have kinship with what is truly good. They took the names of what is good and assigned them to what is not good, to fool the people with the names and link these names to what is not good. So, as if they were doing the people a favour, they took names from what is not good and transferred them to what is good, according to their own way of thinking. For they wished to take free people and enslave them forever.

There are forces that do [favours] for people. They do not want people to come to [salvation], but they want their own existence to continue. (Marvin Meyer translation)

From the Secret Book of John (25): And the angels changed their own likeness into the likeness of the women's husbands, filling the daughters of man with the spirit of darkness, which was mixed with wickedness.

They brought them gold, silver, gifts, as well as metals of copper, iron, and all manner of things belonging to their class. And thus they bound them and brought them into great troubles by leading them astray in much error.

The archons took the names of what is good and assigned them to what is not good



From that time they grew old without enjoyment. They died without any truth and without knowing the God of Truth. And thus the whole of creation became enslaved forever, from the foundation of the world until now.”

From the above-cited texts it becomes clear that these archons keep mankind imprisoned because the human being is ‘related to the good’. By this is meant ‘the radiating Self, hidden in the heart, smaller than a grain of rice, or a mustard seed’, as it is written in the Upanishads. The archons want to prevent the human being from being taken up in that ‘Self’, hidden in the cavity of the heart, for that is Brahman.

In a different text – The Truth about the Archons – found in the Nag Hammadi texts, the leader of the archons says, blinded by power and ignorance: “I am God and nobody else than I is God”. An entity that has placed himself between man and God and says of himself, that he is no one else than God, cannot do anything else but maintain his power by preventing the people themselves making the connection with the God of the Truth.

Dichotomy and redistribution

Deceiving and leading the human being on the wrong track, and thereby keeping him in slavery is how they maintain

their power. Gold and silver, or in other words money, are weapons that are used against the human being for that purpose. Mammon (Scrooge) has the understanding of what has true value, but it is completely reversed in the human being. Nearly everybody believes that money is the basis and not the value of the goods and the services that people deliver to each other. Because money has such a central place and the possession of it is so important, few people ask themselves why interest is actually calculated on the lending of money. Interest is rejected by many world religions and not without reason for in the long run it makes the people poorer and enriches but a small number of people. The 85 richest in the world have more than half of everything that can be materially possessed and 80% of humanity possesses (nearly) nothing. This does not mean that people should not have the experience of wealth, but that many suffer from such deprivation that they cannot lead a decent life. Hardship and material concern cause a blindness for the radiant Self, and extreme wealth also has that consequence. In this way verily ‘the people become old without joy and die without knowing the God of Truth.’

In an extremely sophisticated way a

redistribution mechanism is hidden in the monetary system. A mechanism that contributes to the fact that a continually deeper growing dichotomy arises in society. On the one side, many people are plunged into poverty and on the other side people gather enormous wealth, after which they usually come to the realization that this hasn’t brought them the happiness and freedom they had hoped for. Through the mechanism of redistribution the middle group will disappear in the long run and only the two extremes, poor and rich, will remain. Some have, through their enormous possessions, gotten an equivalent amount of power and have become, consciously or unconsciously, instruments in the execution of the plan of the archons to keep humanity in slavery. The German professor Margrit Kennedy has done research on the redistribution mechanism that is embedded within the monetary

system. This mechanism promotes that the capital in the course of an economic cycle becomes more and more concentrated in a small group of people. She also established that the redistribution gets started by interest. We do not only pay for what we borrow, we also pay through the products and services that we buy. On average in everything we buy there is about a 40% interest added, as Margrit Kennedy determined through her research. The ones who possess capital can allow ‘the money to work for them’. This happens at the expense of the ones that ‘work for the money’. And the group that can permit itself to ‘let the money work for them’ is relatively small. Possession and power are fully interconnected. The ‘inventors’ of the financial system, inspired by Mammon, have thus succeeded to completely distort the understanding of money and value. Money has become the point of departure for everything. If it is there, we are able to trade, and if it isn’t available we have a crisis. If you are able to create money from nothing then you are the one with power. In these times, through the digital revolution, there are commercial banks that create nearly all the money that they have in circulation via an accounting fund, meaning money that only

exists in their computer. This money comes into being because a particular company enters into (and pay attention to the word...) a debt. In other words nearly all money originates from debts. But whose debt is it actually? Because one second before the client signs the borrowing contract, the funds were not there. Then it becomes really very strange for this money that belongs to nobody now levies interest. This insight, coupled to the redistribution system, cannot lead to any other conclusion than that the monetary system that we have has not been developed from humanitarian motives but from a destructive plan for mankind. The architects of this plan use banks as instruments to reach their goal. And that goal is: ‘to keep the entire creation in slavery from eon to eon’ and through that to keep humanity away from the restoration of the connection with the good, rooted in Truth.’

Man is the starting point

In truth, it is completely different from how it is presented to us. Money is not the starting point but the human being himself is. The goods we produce for each other and the services we deliver to each other are the real valuables. Money on its own has no value. If we would but realize that we would have the power

to place the human being centrally in the economic trade and we could place the money in the supporting role where it belongs, and then the grip the archons over us would disappear. Then we could cultivate an interest-free economy wherein a ruling redistribution mechanism would no longer reign and wherein money would not be treated as if it were a product. The result of that would be that a decent existence comes within reach of all people and that we would be able to grow old in joy and with an increasing openness for the God of Truth. ☸

A report in the Dutch daily newspaper Trouw, May 26 2015

BANKS

With whom can you have a debate about banks? I had one with my little five-year-old daughter, which was very illuminating! ‘Papa, what is payment traffic?’, she asked. Car traffic she understood. Cars drive on the road from one place to another. But what should I tell her when she asked me: ‘Who does the road belong to?’ I could do no better than a feeble: ‘To all of us.’ Then the penny dropped. Through the payment traffic system, money goes from one to the other but the accompanying system of its transportation does *not* have to be in the hands of the banks. If the payment traffic were from all of us, we could design the system in such a way as we have done with our road system. Then we all together would pay for its construction and maintenance. N.A. Offenbergh, Leeuwarden.

* Read extensively about this in *Geld komt uit het Niets* (Money out of Nothing), Ad Broere, Human Economy Publishing, 2012

THE DECEPTION



What is going on with the earth?

FRANS SPAKMAN

In every human being, in every soul, there is the desire to express himself/herself in the world. Life-vitality must seek revelation

This world conditions us into a struggle for survival, into competition and encourages ambitiousness and so it is easy to stimulate these even further, to manipulate this eagerness even more: “Destroy the armies of the enemy!” is one of the well-known command-cards in the game of ‘RISK’. Most times the ‘I’ dominates the soul. This leads automatically to inner conflict. Competition is fostered and may even become a destructive force. Frictions and tensions with other fellow human beings are on the rise. Only one can be the winner, which means that everyone else must be the loser. The most benign form of competition is reflected in the expression of the vitality of life. It can be found in the world of sports, games and also in the arts. The competition in these categories is still mostly dedicated to creativity, sportsmanship and accomplishment. This form of competition rarely has any victims, although it often involves a lot of money. Creativity is a very human trait, although often only partly developed.

Even before WWII a famous Dutch historian (Johan Huizinga from Groningen) remarked on this and used the term *Homo Ludens* (the playful human being). This term received international attention and has gained a renewed popularity in recent decades. There is a growing awareness that we, as human beings, are in essence playful beings with creativity as one of our fundamental qualities. World, earth and creation can be seen as our ‘toys’ and the playing rules are formed by the psychology of the territories we ‘play’ in. A cat may play a mouse to death - that is: play so long with the mouse until it is dead and the cat becomes disappointed and bored when the mouse doesn’t move anymore. If we keep on playing the cat-and-mouse-game for our enjoyment until the end, we will probably have broken the rules of the game and stepped over the boundaries of our field of action.

This is what is happening to our planet earth right now. We have the tendency to ‘play’ our planet to death. Our way of playing is not only unsustainable – it kills! There is no ‘co-existence’ anymore;

rather it has become 'co-killing'. Some 500 million animals are butchered each year, which equals the entire population of the EU. We turn the tropical rainforest into agricultural land to feed these growing numbers of animals. We over-fish the oceans and the greenhouse effect causes a rapid change in climate. Mass-animal production plays a big part in these changes and contributes greatly

to the reduction of the world grain reserves. These undermining activities of our economy are the consequence of our far-reaching long-term goals and desires, not to mention our striving for a strong position in the free market economy. We have become blind to the destruction on the planet – of our planet - caused by our actions. But we have only this one planet to live on.

Our destructive actions cannot be blamed on our deeply rooted desire to be creative. Even when our soul has not given up the lead role to the ego and truly searches for creativity without conflict, it is still questionable if a sustainable equilibrium will be possible. The reason for

this situation is human life itself, or expressed in Buddha's words: it is *Dukkha*. In the romantic period of the 19th and 20th century it was acknowledged that *Life equals suffering*. But this is not an objective translation for *Dukkha*. Human life may be better described by the term 'friction'. *Dukkha* means literally 'the wagon wheel that meets resistance'. When our

'wheel' of life has lost its balance then the disturbances of this wheel make the movement of our wagon much more difficult. Or maybe the wheel of life does not meet with any friction and runs smoothly. Friction is usually understood as related to energy, mostly with energy that is lost.

This brings the concept of 'economics' into the picture. If we strive to waste as little energy as possible, we will be economical, in other words 'sustainable'. This model of thought can be projected onto the financial term 'interest'. Interest is a not-sustainable depreciation in the economic-financial system. Some cultures take this into account and charging interest is there seen as usury. The ideal would be a useful movement that does not have any friction, e.g. a 'perpetuum mobile' where there is no loss and no suffering. This seems to be the most sustainable dynamic: movement without a slow-down, movement without energy loss. Many say that only a total standstill, a complete rest or stillness with the absence of any impulse can be seen as sustainable.

Without movement there is no energy loss by friction. Of course, there is a great need for complete stillness and rest. If we only think of the many people that would like to still their restless thoughts, as they know their thoughts have a tight grip on them and create an inner tension. Meditation or entering the inner silence of their true being is impossible for them, because their incessant thoughts keep them occupied. Certain eastern teachings cultivate a state of silence to the extent of restricting bodily functions to a bare minimum. There are monks living in caves of the

Life is movement, movement is friction. This friction is the 'suffering of mankind'.



Sustainability is about not disturbing and not resisting the cycle of life and the flow and use of energy

Himalayan Mountains that exist in a state of coma, with absence of all physical movement, but their consciousness is still present to a certain degree. It is said that these monks remain in this state until the moment they awake to fulfil a certain mission for mankind. It is an interesting approach if we consider that 'Nirvana' is also understood as the elimination of all desires and a path of extinguishing the ego. This non-dynamic or static way of living can even be of some benefit for our earth and its eco-system. But in reality movement and dynamism characterize our universe. The movement of planets and moons follows a certain order. Their orbits have followed this law for millions of years. Except for some small variations their perpetual movements are always the same. And think of Johannes Kepler's teachings, and remember his dictum that every celestial body has its own specific sound frequency. Buddha taught that life is movement. But if we consider human life, this movement meets resistance and thus we have friction. In more poetic words it is described as the 'suffering of mankind'. The question we could now ask is: Is human life possible without suffering and without causing suffering – a life in which our wheel of life does not disturb the cosmic interplay but is still 'alive'? In cosmic terms it is a question of how we can be in resonance with the specific

sound frequency of the earth without violating and abusing it. How can we live without the high price that we force nature to pay for our extravagant needs and habits and for our damaged overindulging organisms? One answer to this question is that the great law of love that encompasses everything and gives everything may bring this about. This law of love is present not only in Christianity, but in almost all cultures, religions and social guidelines. But we could not well survive on this law of love in economic and financial terms. It would not put food on our table and clothes on our back. We therefore don't take it very seriously. We are convinced that by only 'giving' we do not receive enough 'return on investment' for our business and offspring. Most likely we ask ourselves if this law of love is even relevant with regard to the reality of our life. Because it is clear that everything can be given away only once - then it is gone! We see how possession and the power structures of the world favour the rich and make them ever richer and the poor ever poorer. Our lifestyle could be described as a publicly accepted degeneration: our own narrow minded thinking, our limited understanding of what a creative human being truly is, and what creative powers a human being has hidden within him.

We cause more and more friction and resistance in the planetary system. The counteracting and balancing effects that sports, games and arts have aren't anywhere near enough to reach a minimal equilibrium of energies. Our consumer-focused way of living, our constant pursuit for the quickest satisfaction of our uncountable needs created by commerce, the waste and exploitation of resources, the decline in biodiversity ... our desires and notions have reached such extremes that we have become numb to the fundamental human need for reflection on these dire subjects. The majority of people see the above mentioned lifestyle of consumer satisfaction as the foundation and compass of their lives, and as a basic principle of their human psyche. The modern psychologist Steven Reiss for instance names power, honour, revenge, food and sex as the five fundamental desires of the human being. In this context the primitive and destructive practise of 'honour killing' would be seen

as permissible. We see that it is all about the psyche, the soul, and the consciousness of the human being. A true sustainability seems to be unattainable, as is an eternally working 'perpetuum mobile'. Truly frictionless energy seems to be an impossibility in our universe that is defined by matter, time and space - just as the great Law of Love remains unreachable for the human consciousness and soul. What are we forgetting here? We forget that the soul has the ability to change. The soul has the innate quality of transformation. This brings about new insight, new experiences and thus a new reality. We don't have to be an idealist to be inspired by sustainability and the impulse of change. Sustainability is not so much about high-quality products (which are certainly important in their own right) as it is about not disturbing and not resisting the cycle of life and the flow and use of energy. Breaking up and letting-go become important options of sustainability. Are there role models in history that can illustrate such a friction-less process more clearly? Let us first look at the eightfold path of Buddha that attaches much importance to 'letting-go'. When practicing the 'letting-go' the disturbances in the flow of energy will dissipate simultaneously. Thereby a prerequisite for enlightenment is fulfilled. But, as mentioned earlier, this approach can also lead to a passive form of life where the soul loses all creativity. Another aspect is given us in a quote by Hildegard von Bingen: 'As the water flows, so the light glows.' Here light signifies consciousness and

energy. These words also denote that light and water are not the same, but that light can be compared to the flowing of water. Hildegard von Bingen is sometimes called the 'green mystica', because she saw the earth, the human being and the cosmos as one living organism. Is there a possibility of bringing together the concept of a sustainable earth with the reality of matter? Can the undisturbed inflow of light power connect with processes of our 'real' world? Gradually it becomes clear that a 'sacred earth', an earth without 'Dukkha', can exist above all in the revivifying of our soul. Through transformation our psyche is able to find this 'sacred earth' and bring it to life. Our new mentality and new attitude of life can bring it to realization. This agrees with the most advanced metaphysical insights. Namely, that we ourselves create our life and give it meaning. Or in different words: it is the alchemical synthesis of the true self that holds the power of creating an earth in a sustainable sense. When our attitude of life and our mentality have grown and matured to such a degree and have become free of judgement so that energies can flow freely and undisturbed in our soul, then the soul can perceive the 'sacred earth' and will become the creator of a sustainable world. She will recognize the pure cosmic interconnectedness and will play her part in it. In this regard, a new task is placed before us and (probably to our surprise) we will at the same time be given the strength to fulfil it. It is quite different to the fight against the resistances of our wheel of life, which is actually only a continuous suffering. The devastating effects of our consumer driven economy

The charge of our soul plays an important role in the transformation of our consciousness as the key for a possible 'sacred' earth

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and its overpowering influence on everything causes us so much pain; pain because of what we see around us and pain in our hearts. Our soul suffers and is hindered in expressing itself creatively. The high unemployment rates among young adults, especially in industrial countries, takes away their opportunity to express their creativity in their work-life. The financial-economic system and the system of laws and social rules and limits make it very difficult and keep them tightly bound to their situation. Young people then often turn towards work in social fields. In our economic system these occupations only generate a low income and

have little opportunity for moving on to a competitive and advancing career. At least sports and the arts offer them some progress and opportunity to express themselves, although without any financial gain. We live in a time where profits are pushed to the maximum at the expense of everyone and benefiting only the small group of super-rich. This brings about a crisis that forces us to think: is it possible to use the life-energy we daily receive in a different way - a way in which everyone and everything does not have to pay such a high price for it.

Marten Toonder's story *De Bovenbazen* ('The Super-Directors') describes this topic in a striking way: 'Gentleman O.B. Bommel, one of the super-rich, has just completed his doctorate. His life's (hypocritical) motto is that money is not important to him or, as he often quotes 'Money is no object'. He has become a member of the Super-directors, the financial-economic masters of the world. However, his noble, if naive character brings him into contact with the dwarf

'Kwetal' who has universal knowledge, and therefore the knowledge of all nature. Kwetal is a short version of the Dutch words "ik weet 't al" = "I already know") Kwetal fashions for Bommel a 'Spunk Feeder' that is an apparatus that bundles energy'. It continuously produces energy without abusing nature. The apparatus is thus like a 'Perpetuum mobile'. It works with 'nothingness'.

The chairman of the Super-directors of the Super-rich however sees this as a flagrant violation of the rules of the (that is: his) order and argues with Bommel: "What can I earn from 'nothingness'? Stop this nonsense and get in action! We are facing a crisis!" This sounds very much like the situation in the world today. Here also the question may be asked: "What can you earn from 'nothing'?" and an answer may be found on many different levels!

How can the effects of a system that runs on friction-less energy be manifested in our soul? In this context the soul is understood as the creative being that wants to express itself and shape this world with love and not in a destructive way.

This is an old question that already challenged the human minds far back in antiquity.

In Buddha's teachings, as well as in basic Christian teachings, the law of love has a central position. In later centuries we find the same thinking with the philosophers Spinoza and Immanuel Kant ('Kategorischer Imperativ' = 'Categorical Imperative')

Less known in this context is the gnostic-hermetic tradition. In the last century the gnostic Jan van Rijckenborgh summarized the idea of the energy-process in the words: 'Receive everything- give up everything and thereby renew eve-

rything'. This is a revolutionary thought when revolution is understood as 'renewing everything'.

Now we may ask ourselves if the earth is waiting for such a revolution. Do the biological cycles and essential life processes of nature have enough potential for equilibrium?

The famous movie *Koyaanisqatsi* (1982) with music by Philip Glass tries to follow this concept.

Is there sufficient endeavour to re-establish equilibrium? Also, there remains the question of where the energy is to come from for such transformation of soul and consciousness. Since a human being only receives his life-energy at birth it is questionable whether a natural and biological equilibrium is at all possible with all the abuse of nature that is taking place. Let alone with irreversible processes like the extinction of organisms. Would the clean up and purification of the immense pollution and contamination bring back a beautiful earth filled with life? Only the future will tell!

The important question is where to obtain the energy for releasing and transforming everything with the power of love? Throughout antiquity there was a general seeking for an answer to this question. Gnostics spoke of the Pleroma. This is the fullness of highest soul energy always present in the cosmos. It is potentially accessible to everyone and everywhere. Therefore the Pleroma is the fount of fullness from which the human soul can draw. It is everywhere and is always replenished. Thus the soul can give and give again without loss. When freely received energy and wealth can be given away freely there can be no more talk of interest.

It is an obligation for the nobility of the soul. *La noblesse oblige*.

In this context 'wealth' may be seen in a

different light - the hermetic light. Wealth means to possess something that can be given away to everyone like an ever-overflowing fount. How can we approach this source? How may we receive its overflowing energy? - Because we can't just wait until all the energy resources of the planet are used up.

It is obviously not about an active withdrawing, but rather a receiving. Here the 'receiving channel' is the innermost part of our being - where the soul touches us. The mathematical middle of our own cosmic reality is our microcosm, which is also the touching point for the cosmos (the Earth) and solar system.

It is therefore important what role our soul plays in the transformation of our consciousness as the key for a possible 'sacred' earth. Our mentality, our attitude of life, our consciousness, even our entire orientation in life determine the ability to receive the energy of fullness, the energy of renewal which can be given away to everyone. We have to become open for this energy. It means that we have to descend into the depths of our innermost being; we have to enter our own centre to find the overflowing source, the fullness of the Pleroma. Then we can receive the power of this stream of energy with the help of our inner centre,

our heart. This centre or nucleus also has a cosmic aspect in which a connection may be made with the inner sun. Thereby one will discover that the world is in reality considerably bigger and broader than he once thought.

When the energy-stream flows from the gnostic fullness (Hildegard von Bingen called it the Living water) then the body will react on it. In Hildegard von Bingen's case it was an explosion of creativity in music, literature, poetry and many other fields.

The passing on of energy to the surroundings changes the consciousness in a revolutionary way. One receives a so-called 'cosmic consciousness'. A few paintings by Hildegard von Bingen and created via her directions, are a testimony to that. She spoke about visions and the preciousness and of the eternity of life itself. One sees the world with different eyes. It is the view of a planet unknown until now, a new earth. Everything is imbued with divine life.

Just as Spinoza taught us in 'Sub specie aeternitas': in the light of eternity one can see the individual by recognizing the wholeness.

This divine life is also a reality on earth, even when we are not yet able to perceive it with our eyes. The first requirement is an immersion in our deepest inner being to find the fount of all things, the fullness of the One.

Religious literature speaks in this context about God; eastern wisdom calls it Tao or Brahma. The mystery is that God can live and work in us. This happens via the spiritual path to the middle of the heart. When Tao works in and through us then Krishna, the innermost lord, will awake. For this inner birth the heart is often shown as a birth-grotto. In Christianity the stable becomes the birthplace for the lord of life of the microcosm.

This inner principle has a purifying and sustaining effect. This energy-system does not even waste even the smallest little bit. Wherein is creativity located now? When does our 'play' cross the borders of human order?

Herman Hesse's brilliant novel 'Das Glasperlenspiel' ('The glass bead game', 1943) describes the cultural and human doings as a 'play with glass beads'. He writes about the struggle of the human mind against the barbaric lust for power. Johan Huizinga wrote his book 'Homo Ludens' also in a time of rising barbaric danger.

Both authors saw the 'playing' human being's freedom threatened.

Today's danger of our being choked by a total control of a one-sided financial-economic energy-system clearly shows a parallel to the era of World War II. Freedom, and therefore the joy of 'playing', is again under the threat of encapsulation. Let us protect and preserve humanity, the benevolence of the playing field and the necessary play materials - our earth. For we are so immensely rich! 🌱

The instinctive quality to be good

In the future bankers will swear an oath 'to act with integrity'. This could be seen as positive, if it were not so sad that this has even become necessary. It had become obvious to the general public how unjustified the high pay that bankers granted themselves was. Therefore this integrity oath (see below) was formulated.

In the book 'Swimming with Sharks: My Journey into the World of the Bankers' (translated from Dutch 'Dit kan niet waar zijn', 2015) author Joris Luyendijk describes how bankers are tied into a system that may collapse at any moment.

Considering this risk, wouldn't it be justified that bankers make sure they look after themselves first?! But society found this unethical and therefore pushed them into formulating this oath.

But every area of life shows ethical predicaments. Every decision in daily life is also an ethical decision. Who understands that he is one with everything existing, is also

Ethics, in the heart and mind of man, is the spiritual light that shines through his intellect.

aware that each single action has a consequence for the whole and for which he has a responsibility because he is a part of it.

We will always have to make compromises, because as human beings we are far from perfect. We are subject to our instincts and the inextricable mixture of good and evil. But at the same time we also possess a deep inner calling for something much greater.

True ethics is walking the path of equilibrium, the path of the golden mean.

Ethics could be described as the instinctive desire of the human heart to do what is right and a benevolence

towards other human beings because it is fulfilling and uplifting for the self.

There is also a further aspect to it. The theosophist G. de Purucker (1874-1942) writes in his book 'Fundamentals of the Esoteric Philosophy' * 'Ethics, in the heart and mind of man, is the spiritual light that shines through his intellect. They are a guide, a light unto our feet when honestly practised, unflinching, giving infinite peace to the human heart.'

Here the latent faculties of the soul are addressed, so that the soul can open in a spiritual light. And the awakened soul experiences the joy of gaining an ever deeper insight into the cause of all dilemmas.

Banker's Oath

I swear/promise that I will exercise my function properly and carefully.

I swear/promise that I will duly weigh all the interests involved in the enterprise, i.e. those of the clients, the shareholders, the employees and the society in which the enterprise is active.

I swear/promise that in this weighing I will focus on the client's interest and that I will inform the client to the best of my ability.

I swear/promise that I will act in accordance with the laws, regulations and codes of conduct which apply to me.

I swear/promise that I will observe secrecy about anything to which I have been entrusted.

I swear/promise that I will not abuse my knowledge.

I swear/promise that I will maintain an open and verifiable attitude and I know my responsibility towards society.

I swear/promise that I will perform to the best of my abilities to maintain and promote confidence in the financial services sector.

So help me God! / This I declare and promise!

* G. de Purucker: *Fundamentals of the Esoteric Philosophy*, Theosophical University Press, 1979

THE DECEPTION

A process with boundaries

In the world of time and space life and cultures follow a comparable process already expressed many times as 'rising, shining and fading' or as 'growth, maturity and decline'. These three phases usually progress gradually, with a smooth transition from the one into the other, with only the end seemingly abrupt, that is, the border crossing of the dissolution and resolution, until the composite organism is no longer. The transitions between these three phases are, despite the gradual nature of the process, all about borders. Life is a process with boundaries and the transition of these boundaries causes lasting effects.

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Direct Immediately after birth, a young child is already confronted with limitations. Then during his upbringing limits are often imposed upon him, sometimes too few so that the child feels no framework, no clear direction that it can learn to master. But mostly it will be his educators who draw the lines that make sense in the transition to the second phase, that of his maturing. Traversing this border can be impassioned, because an adolescent usually not only has some a rebellious attitudes against his educators, but often even aggression and obstinacy are used with full force to claim and establish his new domain of independence.

When things go well when he crosses a border new domains are opened up, and he appreciates them and confirms their value. Then he will inhabit these domains and give them substance and meaning with dynamism and vitality.

Most often after crossing that border a young person comes to rest in his own new system of standards and he is able to develop a certain balance in the prime of his or her life.

Sometimes however, the inclination to cross borders does not stop and the young person continues to push at the limits and tries to overthrow everything of value and the standards that are maintained there.

In the transition from maturity to decline, the transition from shining to fading, the intensity of the boundary crossing is often no longer an issue: one knows the



relativity of things, positively appreciates one's own 'life accomplishments' and begins to view a broader perspective that can bring a deeper meaning to one's life. There is a sense of dissolving boundaries; they seem to become more transparent, the 'transition' becomes easier to see things on a global scale also to ponder the meaning of one's own life on a wider scale.

To do away with boundaries can even result in erasing all the borders for the consciousness, so that the global becomes universal and can be 'seen' in the light of eternity.

Decline and fading will at the same time bring maturity, a wealth that can be used for the benefit of others. The wealth of experience and consciousness can be used for renewal and transformation. The impending end of life is then more of a great mystery, an unlocking of the continuity of the spirit in 'the unity' and the universality, the Hermetic knowledge that there isn't really such a thing as death.

The three recognisable cultural stages

The three stages of life: growth, maturity and decline, the setting of boundaries, the crossing of borders and the dissolving of borders can also be recognised in our own culture, as it was influenced by the Rosycross Manifestos of the 17th century and historically sometimes referred to as the newest period in history. In the first decades of the 17th century we see the impulse of a new-western culture to make an effort to establish those very early and tender cultural values in Europe, which

the Confession of the Rosicrucian Brotherhood says is a powerful and healthy baby. The setting of boundaries for this new culture saw quite a few growing pains: the Rosycross' idea of Hermetism and the universality of man and universe, initially could not find fertile soil. Giordano Bruno could not initiate this beautiful image in the totality of art, science and religion, for he died prematurely at the stake; there was absolutely no openness for a new religious and scientific culture. These growing pains were serious, with great suffering and the near suffocation of that new culture: Boehme, Andreae, Comenius, all three had to suffer a black period of dissension, outright enmity and violence. But if we look at science and art now, we see the clear signs of the new culture that established itself and which set boundaries in its own new domain.

As well, a more objective view of reality, beyond superstition and religious dogma, won ever more ground in science. It was strongly helped by new instruments that could undeniably approach reality objectively, instruments like the telescope and the microscope. It was also helped by astronomy, subordinating augurs who used superstition in the stars to take money from naive people, and by alchemy getting a chemical foundation whilst more and more 'physical' elements were discovered. The new mechanistic and rational universe of Newton and Descartes soon determined scientific thinking (and limited it, as it turned out later). The current, popular 'measuring is knowing' derives directly from this sober scientific thinking of the 17th century. Spinoza was able to proclaim, and install into the culture of his time a new and superior hermetical notion of God that is still experienced as refreshing and relevant.

A cultural change also occurred in the arts. Think of the superior painting in the 'low countries' and the break-through in music that allowed the infinity of musical expressions to become a fundamental principle. Even now we notice that new melodies are continuously arising, in which modulations are used that are only possible because of this break-through. And we think of the hermetically influence of Shakespeare, whose unparalleled force of eloquence allowed him to assert a cultural as well as a spiritual impulse.

One could say that this first phase of our recent cultural history manifested itself in the 17th century and the first half of the 18th century in its concreteness, clarity, precision, soberness, measure and number. In music Bach is a good example of this.

In the second phase, that of maturing and border crossing, we see a revolutionary attitude gaining ground. Think of the French Revolution, which culminated in the transcendence of the boundaries between classes and ranks, as a result of which the nobility had to surrender their many privileges. The limitations of seeing just the stark numbers and irritated sometimes so badly that for example Goethe called Bach 'an old nag'. In general people began to resist the neatly classified order of the previous phase. In science and the arts of that time we see clear signs of a new culture. Revolutions, emancipations, inventions, and experiments were the order of the day, and they were quite often violent and provocative. This border-crossing attitude made industrialisation possible, including things like the development of

In science and art we clearly see signs of a new culture

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photography, for example. Ideologies were founded independent from religion and experimented with in society.

Colonisation was responsible for pushing the borders of many European powers. They organised their own networks, often worldwide. Thus Africa, in that 2nd phase was divided up piecemeal among the European nations.

After the period of romanticism, in which people often rebelled against the rationality of the first phase, we see that abstractions appear in paintings, and musicians start to experiment with letting go of tonality. In poetry and prose, Joyce's 'Finnegan's Wake' for example, and in the chronological abstraction of Becket and Pinter, we see them often letting go of the ordinary sequence of events.

These border crossings could have culminated in disrupting the set order, that is boundlessly and consistently turning away from any logical and reasonable connection, just for the sake of being original and innovative. Art ceased to be exalted, as it had been, and as certainly medieval art had been intended. In science the border crossing of the 2nd phase influenced all disciplines and caused not only uncontrollable technological revolutions, in warfare for example, but also brought about the development of the atomic bomb, atomic energy and the development of production manufacturing. And for all the extra products created, a destination had to be found. In philosophy we see an unprecedented prosperity of idealism and materialism, leading to a kind of 'consciousness-industry'. Already in the 19th century there was a search for transcendental wisdom and religion, an orientation on wisdom from the East such as Buddhism, Taoism and Hinduism. Also in mathematics and physics the limits were surpassed with non-Euclidean geometry and quantum mechanics.

Giordano Bruno was the first to dare to postulate the infinity of the universe and to relate it to the microcosm. In the existing religion there was an attempt to shift attention inward with esoteric approaches that often claimed eloquence beyond the physical perceptible reality. This 2nd phase of border crossings of the European western civilisation began in the second half of the 18th century and lasted up to the 20th century.

We now find ourselves in the 3rd phase, that of dissolving the boundaries, of globalisation, abolition, transparency, the downfall of material and cultural values and at the same time the ability to blend into Universality. Here we see an end to ideologies, the unravelling of existing dogmas and the disentangling of existing certainties, theses and assumptions. This fading, this decline, ultimately means the end of the European, western culture, although it still takes some time. It also means that what in a spiritual sense is transcendental can be awakened, the dissolving of boundaries can be experienced as a Unity in the mysticism of existence and the corresponding attitude of life can be practiced.

Solidarity with everything and everybody on this earth can become a living reality, but it can also become suffocating.

If 'letting go' and dying, as we know it in the endura, in Buddhist and in Taoist practice, comes with resistance, a fight will still arise, which can even gain apocalyptic characteristics. After disentangling and letting go there is no going back



without the greatest difficulty. Like Christian Rosycross who experienced, when he wanted to turn around, that he had to face a storm that was too strong for him.

What then is the reality of the resulting situation? Quantum mechanics in theory has given us the prospect that the reality of this 3rd phase – the phase of dissolving boundaries – will become more visible. This will involve the discovery of what our sometimes absolutism status, by modern consideration, actually is. We have been raised to talk and think about ‘things’ as absolute.

But our old world of solid objects and deterministic natural laws resolves in this 3rd phase into a world of wave-like, interconnected patterns. Concepts like ‘elementary particle’, ‘material substance’ or ‘isolated object’ have lost their significance, because the universe appears to us as a dynamic network of inseparable energy patterns. The universe therefore can be experienced in the 3rd phase as a

**Dissolving
borders has
begun, new
dimensions
are noticeable**

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dynamic, inseparable whole, in which the observer is always an essential part. The observer in his microcosm is also at the same time in the macrocosm. It is noteworthy that Paracelsus already formulated this before the 1st phase as follows: “In order to understand the true meaning of Alchemy and Astrology, it is necessary to clearly appreciate the inner kinship and identity of microcosm and macrocosm – and of their mutual inter-action. All the forces of the universe are potentially present in the human being and his body, and all human organs are nothing else than results and representatives of the forces of nature” (translation Frans Hartman). We are not separate parts of a whole, we are a Whole in our separateness. It is therefore logical that we meet on this earth, in this phase that breathes out of this Oneness. In Spirituality it used to be called the planet-Spirit, the Lord of the new Earth, the Christ. He who says He makes the two ‘one’. In dissolving the boundaries we meet this new breath both as an end and at the same time as endless, with regard to western European culture, a Christianity of consummation, as a force to experience the new Earth that is ageless and at all times agreeable: with ‘a light burden’ and ‘a soft yoke’. The old earth, ‘things’ of our old imagination and experienced with our old consciousness, are a thing of the past. We can now see ‘things’ in the light of eternity; we see the mystery right through the old earth. As J. van Rijckenborgh says: “Each thing on earth is irradiated with divine life and worthy of worship”. That is the final phase of a process with borders.

It may be that other cultures will meet our culture on the universal basis, as soon as we are ripe for the true meeting. We can always learn something. When the English colonised Australia it was done with considerable violence and the stealing of the land of people from the very old culture of the Aboriginals. They were subjugated. Poles were placed and land was cordoned off with barbed wire. “This is mine” the new owner said, “this land is my property”.

The descendants of the Aboriginals, of the old culture, could not understand this. They could not understand the concept of land ownership. When some of them learned the English language they asked what the English meant by possession and ownership of land. The English failed to bridge the culture gap and finally an Aboriginal, who had developed a certain notion of what the English meant, said: “We don’t own the land, but the land owns us”. In other words we belong to the earth. The borders are erased when we realise our responsibility for the Earth in relation to microcosm and macrocosm and our place in the middle as an observer in the reality. For the forces of eternity that exceed all borders and limitations, are present in our midst. ✪

The Way of the King



In the Taoist vision on transformation and inner alchemy the path is called: the Way of the King. This is expressed in the Chinese character for “king” that you see pictured and that is pronounced as ‘wang’.

The top horizontal stroke symbolizes the Yang or heaven - the bottom stroke the Yin or earth.

Together they make the world of duality possible. The middle horizontal stroke symbolizes the Yong, the timeless centre in the heart of all creation. It does not move itself but it makes the interaction between yin and yang possible cf. verse 11 of the Tao Te Ching: “The thirty spokes of the wheel unite around the hub, but only because of its empty space is it of use”

The vertical stroke symbolizes the power of Tao called Te. This Force flows from the One into the world of duality and back again.

The core of the human being is not only in heaven, (Yang) or on earth (Yin) but in the immovable centre (Yong) that connects Yin and Yang.

Heaven	Yang	王	Head	Man
Centre	Yong		Heart	Neutral
Earth	Yin		Hands	Woman

The Yong symbol is also regarded as a reflection of Tao. The Yong is the point where Yin and Yang are in balance with each other: the ‘place’ where the earth grounds heaven and where heaven elevates the earth.

Because of the constant interaction between Yin and Yang everything that exists becomes sharpened, polished and refined. It undergoes a process of transformation followed by an inner alchemy. Eventually as a result of this, the whole universe shall become sanctified and glorified, after which everything returns to Tao. The art in this alchemical process is to keep the Yong in the centre pure, while Heaven and Earth (Yin and Yang - above and below) through their mutual interaction, transform matter. This is made possible by the vertical inflowing power of Te - the energy of Tao. The Te makes the transmutation of the ten thousand things possible - that is in the alchemical meaning of the word.

The Great Friend of God from the Oberland

In the mystery tradition of the West, we often hear speak of a "Friend of God from the Oberland" – a spiritual eminence of the 14th Century. He is often mentioned as a great source of inspiration for better-known movements and he was a great example for e.g. Johannes Tauler, Rulman Merswin, Johannes Ruusbroeck, Luther as well as the classical Rosicrucians. According to tradition, they all had in one way or another a special connection with this Friend of God. In this edition of Pentagram new discoveries of this mysterious figure are brought to light for the first time. These insights are based on documents that were kept by the Order of St. John in Strasbourg, found there two hundred years ago but not published at that time.

According to these documents, this mysterious man of the 14th Century was known only under the name of "The Great Friend of God from the Oberland". He retreated into a world created by himself, a self-built hermitage, along with four brothers, a cook and an intendant doubling as their messenger. They kept themselves hidden in a secret location in the woods, somewhere in Alsace or in close by Switzerland. Undiscovered except by other Friends of God who were able to find him led by their intuitive inspiration. Why did they want to remain unknown and decide to lead an anonymous life until the mature old age of almost one hundred years? This strongly resembles another mythological figure a century later, who also lived to be one hundred years old: Christian Rosenkreuz. Did they have

anything to do with each other? Most certainly, according to Rudolf Steiner. In his view, a whole new phase of development for humanity started with these two men – humanity, which was at the nadir of a spiritual darkness in the west. This development brought a decisive turn only much later, in the 21st century. With what discoveries are we being confronted today? And what does this earlier impulse tell us from a modern perspective? A varied and diversified society is fast failing and propelled into black-white thinking. 'We' and 'they', so it seems, cannot be integrated. Maybe "transfiguration" is a better word for it than integration. For it is not about a game of words but about a profound understanding of what is going on. What does transfiguration mean in the light of an unsolvable conflict between opposites? Is it possible to live in duality and at the

same time in unity? Can both perspectives become clearer, more transparent so that they can shine both through each other: Unity that lights up through duality. That is the challenge that we face.

Different orders

The Friends of God of the fourteenth century are an example of the many groups from all times and cultures that strove towards the Light. When we go back to the 14th century, we usually begin with Meister Eckhart, who lived from 1260 to approximately 1328 in the Rhineland. His most important pupil and friend was Johannes Tauler, who lived in Strasbourg from 1300-1361.

From him, we go directly to the mysterious Great Friend of God from the Oberland, who supposedly lived from 1315 to 1420. If the historical data are correct, then it was exactly 700 years ago last year that the Great Friend of God from Oberland was born in Luzern, in the centre of Europe as the son of a wealthy merchant of the affluent middle class. After the death of his parents, he retired from the business life, broke off an engagement, sold his possessions and devoted himself for five years to charity in his hometown, before retreating definitively. Through letters he had delivered in Strasbourg by the messenger mentioned earlier, he was in regular contact with the new local monastery some 100 kilometres away from his hidden hermitage. The Brothers of St. John, a type of Knights Templar order - considered him an enlightened master and their spiritual father. A few years after his last letter in 1380, the Brothers of St. John started looking for him, but to no avail. Five centuries afterwards, at the end of the nineteenth century, theologians like Carl Schmidt, Auguste Jundt and Henry Denifle began to take an interest in his writings and brought forward several hypotheses of the historical background of this Friend of God and who this Friend of God could have been. They too could not come to a final understanding of who this mysterious figure could have been and finally halted their research. In the end, Denifle, a catholic theologian from the Dominican order came to the conclusion that the Friend of God had never existed, but had been a product of his friend Rulman Merswin's imagination, who had founded the St. John Monastery in 1370 supposedly in close connection with the Friend of God. With this, the research into who he had been,

where he had lived and what he had meant for the historical development of Europe was completely abandoned. According to Denifle, he had only lived in a few people's imagination. Thus nobody needed to look for or follow him. Nobody needed to take his writings seriously.

Johannes Tauler

Rudolf Steiner however had a different opinion and held on to the fact that the Great Friend of God had most definitely existed and moreover had played a very significant political and religious role in the great struggle for freedom of the Western people. To Rudolf Steiner, he is a kind of predecessor to the Brotherhood of the Rosycross, which, according to Steiner, resulted from the Friends of God. With this hypothesis as a starting point – which we here neither accept nor decline – it would be valuable to reconstruct his message by means of the letters that he wrote to other Friends of God which were found later. One of the most important friends among them according to the letters was Johannes Tauler. Johannes Tauler lived and preached in Strasbourg. His spiritual mentor, Master Eckhart, was a Dominican monk like himself. As is well-known, this order played a cruel role in the crusades against the Cathars in the preceding century with a tragic low point in the burning of a great numbers of Bonshommes, or 'Perfect Ones', who had taken refuge in the citadel of Montségur in 1244. The inquisition of the Dominican order focused its attention not only on heretics but also on the brothers in their own ranks who dared to preach on a 'faith ignited from within man'. They remained critical against the external authority of the king as well as their own holy church. We shall cite directly from

The Inquisition of the Dominican Order was also directed against the fellow brothers in their own ranks who preached about an inner faith

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the process against Meister Eckhart in which he had to defend himself against the attack of his fellow brothers. Another Dominican, brother Durandus, gives the accused at the end of the interrogation the chance for some closing remarks before the final verdict is pronounced against him.

Meister Eckhart then rises and addresses his fellow brothers:

"I say unto you that if you yourself are not like the truth about which we have preached here, it will be impossible for you to follow me or to understand me. The truth of anything can only be recognized by the truth within us. The right hearing brings up the growth of the potential understanding of, for instance, poverty of the soul, which is already present within us. It is only from our inner poverty, that 'is' that we can understand the poverty of the soul and so become capable of giving up our seemingly richness - the overestimation of ourselves - our self-righteousness - our egotism. The more one gives up his own wilfulness the deeper he can hear these words and taste the truth in it."

Eckhart's defence

The last defence of Meister Eckhart, at the moment he stands before the inquisition, at the end of his life, starts as follows:

"Eminences, brothers, friends!

This night I had a dream. I saw the Lord. He stood alone under a free sky but was surrounded by thick walls in a big city. The dream can be explained in several ways. To me it has significance as regards the life of every man. The only one in us that is free is the Lord within us. But walls continuously surround Him. When He ordered to tear down the walls to re-build them in three days, He referred to the walls of the old faith, of the fixed convictions of law. By His death, He pulled them down and by His resurrection He brought renewal. The dying that He underwent was so complete that He himself felt deserted even

by the Father. With that, He surrendered his last hold on the old fortress.

What I have always requested from my listeners is that they pull down their walls. Also from you, I ask now to pull them down. Maybe you are not even conscious of your walls. But I see them very clearly because your walls were my walls. In vain I stormed against them, until I finally saw that one may only go through walls after one's death and resurrection.

Thus the Lord has been our example. Straight through walls and closed doors He came to his pupils. After his death they opened themselves up to Him and one exalted day the disciples saw him resurrected in their midst.

What kind of walls do I speak of?

Every word is actually a wall for life itself! As are every written word, every proposition, every teaching. They are walls for the freely fleeting word that comes directly from the heart, from the source. In every dogma, life is killed.

The walls behind which Paul lived seemed impenetrable. But on his way to Damascus the Light penetrated his walls. And he emerged a resurrected man.

If the light of the Lord starts its work within us, our walls become as made of light for He makes them transparent.

Whereby do we see that he starts His work in us? If, in our stony prison we burn with a desire for freedom. And this becomes stronger as soon as He lets us see through things and involves us in His resurrection. All that is old and familiar then falls away from us as if it were a wall. New elements emerge and fill us with enthusiasm. We discover the wonder of the soul: her former smallness and poverty make way for a new and immeasurable fullness. She is present in every particle, she fills it with life and yet she herself remains undivided.

In this way, we see that in the soul, the one and the multitude unite. And we also discover the wonder of space in the universe. There, time does not exist. Time takes place within time-less-ness. And furthermore we discover that past and present merge in the now. There is only the eternal now. These insights can only be transmitted by the

heart and only from heart to heart. It is not possible through ordinary words. The only thing I want to do is to make the walls transparent. Only then can we guide each other in the ineffable.

I understand that this sounds contradictory. Make it transparent ... how shall I explain this?

It is as a request from God to the others straight through me. What I ask here cannot be enforced. What I ask, only God can ask from you.

I am aware of that myself and yet I ask it from you. At this moment, I wonder whether I have razed my own walls enough. I do not ask you to recognize me. I also do not ask God that you will acknowledge me. However, I ask Him that he allows you to see with the heart. Then your verdict will be His verdict, spoken by you, accepted by me."

Then unexpectedly a fellow brother gets up to speak.

Raimondus Bequini addresses him and says:

"Dear brother Eckhart, allow me to bring forth another interpretation of your dream:

You see yourself lonely, deserted by us. But that is not the case! You belong to us! Also in your error you still stay with us and are part of us. Yes, even in the fire with which you defend this error. But error is error and must be admitted. To be at fault is ever the fate of man. Regrettably, it is all too often its favourite child. I find it horrendous when I think that out of love for the truth, we can come to the greatest error. Let us soften it a bit. You talked about the walls that you want to break down. Please, just see that we

need these walls. Without these walls we would err all the more. For us they are not walls, my friend! They are the supporting pillars of our faith. They protect us against the adversary that wants us to commit these errors. Only with these walls can we hold away the errors. Without these walls we are lost.”

Is there is a bridge over the gorge?

Is there a bridge between the outer church and the inner invisible church that has no walls? Between established thinking and an openness of the heart? There is still a strong fundamentalism in this world. It is a strong force that is difficult to recognize and to let go of. That is apparent through our treating of dissenters. But our own fundamentalism may hide itself in a kind of spiritual self-preservation. What is real spiritual freedom? Is it possible to be free also from our own adamant convictions? The Truth and what seems true can be quite close to each other.

“Those who claim to know, do not know” said Lao Tzu. “The highest form of knowledge is to know nothing” the Rosicrucians said. In this same sense, the Friends of God spoke of “the poverty of the soul.”

There are no bookshelves full of wisdom or holy scriptures in the heart. The heart often resembles an open stable or a cave in which the Light that is not of this world of time and space, must be born over and over again.

The Gnostics call this light Gnosis, pure awareness, and it is completely different from the ordinary knowledge of the mind. A Friend of God like Eckhart always spoke the Living Word that can be recognized by one’s own inner Light. Nonetheless, the existing structure of the established church experienced it as a threat the same way the ministry of Jesus was perceived as a threat by the

scribes. This is the characteristic of the Gnostic efficacy: it breaks down the old structures and builds up a new Reality. Therefore, in essence, it cannot be organized in a system with fixed doctrines and rules. The Gnostic path – if we even can speak of a path – is the direct route to the heart of God and vice versa. A Path without a mediator or a go-between priest – and most certainly without authority or sanctions for transgressions. A teacher, or a community, can of course be of help, either temporarily or for a longer period, if however when this teacher or this community emphasizes that it is about an inner path that one can go only via self-authority. The Friends of God knew this only too well even though they did belong formally to an outer church in the fourteenth century. That is why they invoked so much resistance from the authorities of the church. The path of inner freedom may also be dangerous. The authorities wondered: “What kind of freedom is it actually all about? To be able to follow one’s own way? To get to some kind of spiritual enlightenment as soon as possible? To be free from (our) rules and obligations?”

In the Theologia Deutsch, (Theologia Germanica) which is one of the more well-known mystical texts of the Friends of God, they look at the contemporary “Brethren of the Free-Spirit” with a critical eye. These Brethren of the “Free Spirit” resembled the Friends of God in many aspects, but were viewed by the Friends of God as an imitation linked with the self-wilfulness of the individual, the freedom for every person, like a form of spiritual materialism. The true spiritual process of which we read in a meaningful sermon of Tauler, was seen by the Friends of God as an engaging process of change, or trans-

figuration, that could raise all kinds of reactions within the existing spiritual outer world. They could be reactions of resistance or destructiveness, or sometimes the building of a façade, a front.

The true Friends of God therefore, had to manoeuvre their boat ‘between a rock and a hard place’. For a Friend of God, finding the true spiritual freedom meant to let go of his own will, in accordance to the famous saying of Jesus “not my will, but your will be done”. This was an essential prerequisite for him. The Friends of God and later the Rosicrucians were in complete agreement that it was imperative to surrender to the process of inner soul rebirth, and thus to the growth of another, new consciousness. In their efforts to find a connection with the existing church, the Friends of God used the language and the images to explain the spiritual path that people in that period were familiar with: the path of suffering that Jesus endured. Not to believe in it as a kind of story, but to follow it as an inner path; not with the church as an authority, but only with the awakening consciousness from the heart as the guide, the inner lord, that wants to break down the old temple of one’s own thinking and desires to build a new temple.

Schism

Eckhart defended himself against his fellow brothers but still they denounced him and finally sent him on to Avignon for a final verdict by the present Pope. As far as we know, Eckhart died in 1328, in Avignon or somewhere on the road. This spared him and his order a shameful execution. A few months later, the verdict was still concluded in Cologne, to the great satisfaction of his fierce opponents, but also to the great dismay of his friend and pupil Johannes Tauler, who was at that time around thirty years old and who regarded Eckhart as his great example and his source of inspiration. It is a bitter pill, and hard to swallow for the Friends of God. And an inner separation starts to manifest itself in their unity. Exactly fifty years later, the Great Friend of God, following his own inspiration, travels to the pope in Rome to urge him to start a great reformation of the Church. The Pope hesitates, not daring to take this risky step. When he dies barely a year later, a dispute for his succession flares up. This leads to a new great dissention within the Church. This rift in the Church is deep and will eventually result in a definite schism - the well-known Reformation that was started by Luther and essentially inspired by the Friends of God and the work of Tauler, together with a new enthusiasm from the universities of Tübingen and Wittenberg, which saw a new era dawning for Central Europe.

Margareta Porete

In the 14th century, the Church was still extremely powerful, and a conviction for heretical thoughts could easily lead to a public execution at the stake. One of Eckhart best spiritual friends, the Mystic Margareta Porete, was publicly burnt at the stakes in Paris only a few

years before the sentencing of Meister Eckhart in Paris. Jacques de Molay, the spiritual leader of the Templars, suffered the same fate mainly because the king of France had his eyes on Jacques’ power and wealth. The King had persuaded the pope and his cardinals to condemn the Templars at the Council of Vienne, north of Avignon. During this Council, Eckhart witnessed the relentless power game - which of them would ultimately be in charge, the pope or the king? The pope lost the battle and the king was able to confiscate all the properties of the Knights Templar who, in his eyes, had become all too powerful and wealthy and he then used their possessions to pay for his wars. At that time, many thought that the announced Armageddon was near. But who was the anti-Christ: the pope or the king – or maybe both? It was a time people asked for a new saviour. Who could fill that role and how would the New Jerusalem be built?

But the New Jerusalem is not built in the outer world.

Around 1350, numerous disasters plagued Europe. There was a fierce battle between the pope and the king of Bavaria where cities had to choose which side they were on and then a devastating earthquake hit the city of Basel. Fatal outbreaks of the plague exterminate half of the population of the great cities including Strasbourg. Often the Jews were blamed for it. But for the Great Friend of God – who lived at that time in complete anonymity – all of this was in line with the complete disarray of the spiritual life in Europe. For him, the European culture had reached its darkest nadir. There was no light in the hearts of men. Everyone lived in fear of the next disaster or of the damnation of hell that awaited him in the afterlife.

For the Friends of God it was imperative to surrender to the growth of another consciousness

Both the spiritual and the secular rulers were guided by their own interests and suppressed the people who depended on them. It was a hopeless situation that urgently demanded a change.

Tauler keeps a low profile during this time and sees that he is not regarded negatively in the eye of the authorities. Moreover, he is considered one of the best preachers in the area of Rhineland and was well known between Cologne and Basel.

In that same year of 1350, a fifteen year younger man visits Tauler in Strasbourg and asks him whether he wants to take his confession and be his counsellor. He is a layman and like Tauler from a rather wealthy merchant family, and therefore able to travel a lot. Tauler does not know much more about him, but sincerity and a deep faith radiate from his eyes. The young man asks him whether he wants to give a sermon about perfection. Reluctantly, Tauler agrees, but he wonders whether the layman can grasp the contents because of the level of high philosophy and it is given in Latin as well. Scholars would grasp it but not an ordinary layman. He does so anyway and in 24 items he explains the teachings of Dionysius the Areopagite: a mystic of the highest order who is the fruit of Greek philosophy and the Christian doctrine of salvation.

Radical change

To Tauler's great surprise, the young man is able to give a brief summary of each item during his next visit. He had understood the doctrine completely. How was that possible? Tauler's amazement rises even more when the young man, after being asked what he thought of it, answered that everything was true but that he intuitively knew that Tauler

did not shape his life accordingly. It was book's wisdom, not a living knowledge from within.

The impact of these very confronting words constitutes a turning point in Tauler's life. The exemplary attitude of the layman affects Tauler deeply and the roles are reversed. Tauler humbly asks the layman whether he would be his master instead of his pupil. This is followed by a process of a radical inner conversion which, after two years, leads to his spiritual breakthrough. On the advice of the layman, the preacher withdrew into his cell in the monastery and no longer appeared in public. He even thought to leave the church but his anonymous teacher advised him to stay and only inwardly distance himself from

the Church as an institution of power.

First it was thought that he was ill and later that he was insane for nothing remained of his once so proud spiritual ego. At the end of January 1352, after a difficult process and a horrible night, he experienced a breakthrough of the Light comparable to the one experienced by Paul in Damascus.

Only then his spiritual mentor allows him to preach again. But this turns out to be a disaster in which the last remains of his spiritual ego disappear. In the crowd-

In 1366 the city of Strasbourg gave the l'île Vert or 'the Green Island', a place where a monastery had already been established for two centuries, to Rulman Merswin and his friends so they could establish their spiritual home there and have a place of retreat.



ed expectant church he is unable to utter a single word. Helplessly in the pulpit he can only cry, cry and cry and his tears silence his mouth ... From that time on he was no longer of any importance to his fellow brothers and sisters and the common people. Of the old Tauler, the famous preacher, who could speak so eloquently, nothing else was left.

Reborn

However, at a later moment he received another opportunity to deliver a sermon, this time not for the people but for the lay-sisters of one of the monasteries of the “Beghards”*. We cite the beginning and several other fragments of his sermon of April 1352. Although the words are the language of that time, the living essence still speaks to us: “Dear friends, it is already more than two years ago that I preached here for the last time. At that time, as usual, I spoke in Latin about the 24 points of the perfect life, based on Dionysius’ writings. But I have promised myself to preach no longer in Latin unless it be for scholars who want to delve into philosophy. With you, I would like to speak in our mother tongue and as friends. Let us now turn inwardly and ask for mercy so we can listen in the proper manner. As a text, I have chosen a verse from the Gospel of Matthew: ‘Behold, here comes the groom. Go and meet him.’ The groom is the radiant Light of the Lord with in us – and the bride, are we; it is our soul.

Dear friends, we are called to go and meet the groom in complete openness. But perhaps we have lost sight of the right path and all roads seem to be in shambles; we have lost track. Yes, the path may have become so foreign to many of us, that we simply do not feel capable – despite how eager we are to go the path – to go forward and meet the groom. That is what I would like talk about with you today. For everyone must in some way surmise how it must be to be a bride? How then will you meet your groom as a bride; meet the

loved one you desire to be united with?

Dear friends, it seems clear to me that you as a loyal bride will avoid everything that your loved one would dislike, such as too much focus on superficial entertainment and material pleasures, more than you reasonably need. You should not show off your successes, your beauty, your good behaviour and your learning. It is better to be just yourself in a natural and modest way. If you are willing to give up all outward things you are attracted to in favour of your beloved one, he will like you even more. Then the Beloved one will address you and say: “If you want to come forward to meet me as your groom, I will ask you to follow part of the same path I have gone”. Thirty-three years have I suffered hunger, thirst, cold, bitter defamation, pain and at last bitter death in favour of my bride – out of my great love for her. Are you also willing to give up everything and even to die for your beloved one? With your whole heart and out of love? I say to you, if your loyalty to me is deep enough, all your fear will vanish.

If you hear these words, it may scare you and you will become aware of how many reservations you still have. Are you really prepared to give up everything and to speak an unconditional ‘yes’ to whatever life will bring you: disease or health, weal or woe, sweet or sour, cold or heat, dry or wet? Are you prepared to give up your own will and to obey your heart, to obey the deepest Light within you, your Love?’

What will happen if the groom recognizes the true surrender of the bride? Because she begs him, he will give her an especially refined, sweet drink. What will this potion do to her? It will let her suffer even more all manner of temptations and wilfulness that are weighting her down. And because she as a bride realizes that the groom gives it to her from an earnest sympathetic disposition, she accepts it willingly because of Him and his Love. She turns to Him and says: ‘Ah my beloved groom, it is good that you do not want like I

want. I accept it the way you want it. I drink this potion that you offer me out of love. Whatever it will bring me, weal or woe, I surrender myself completely out of love for you.’

The more the groom realizes the seriousness and dedication of his bride, the more he loves her. And out of this love he lets her suffer her natural state so long until she has grown more beautiful and is finally free from all her difficulties, impurities and afflictions. Once that has happened he will finally speak to her: ‘Now you have become a snowy-white beauty, my sweet bride, and you have grown very dear to me.’ And in his presence she feels his immeasurable friendship and love. At the joyful feast of marriage, the eternal Father of the groom will be present and speak to the bride: ‘Well then, my gentle chosen maiden, now is the time to go to the temple.’ And he takes the groom and the bride by the hand, brings them to the temple and unites them in divine love. They will be united so deeply that they cannot be separated from each other, neither in time nor in eternity. When they are married in this divine way, the groom asks: ‘Dear eternal Father, who will be cupbearer in this marriage?’ Then the father speaks: ‘It will be the Holy Spirit.’ He will come and pour a measure of abundant divine love onto the bride and ignite the love in the groom in such way that the bride will be beside herself and drinks of this love in its deepest essence, resulting in an intoxication that makes her forget both herself and all creatures, both in time and eternity. Dear friends, she who is invited to such a noble and spiritual wedding and actually comes this far, will experience and taste the true, merciful sweetness of the Holy Spirit.”

Thus ran the first sermon of the reborn Tauler, after his own two-year process. As mentioned before, it was another time and another language. On the one hand this was in line with the existing tradition. On the other hand, it was a clear break and a renewal. The essence was

a deep faith in the necessity and in the possibility of a complete transformation from within.

The old Tauler really possessed an intellectual knowledge of perfection. But now, he also experienced, through a deep and far-reaching process, what he already knew in theory and he shared this experience with his audience. And through the power of this own experience, his words had vastly more impact than before. Later in this sermon, extraordinary things happened in his audience. Several listeners were so deeply moved that they fell unconscious to the ground. A man fell on the ground whereby the bystanders thought that he had died on the spot. They shouted to Tauler to stop with his sermon, because it was too much for some in his audience. Considering the dramatic situation of the time, death was a familiar phenomenon to almost everyone. People often lived on a razor’s edge. Their ordinary daily life was filled with uncertainties. That is why people were open for a salvation that was outside the well-known paths, a salvation that could touch them in their deepest inner being. And Tauler offered his audiences such a way of radical internalisation during the following nine years that he preached. His sermons seemed to be just within the margins of acceptability of the church, even though he had risen far above of what he had formerly believed in.

As new men

Two hundred fifty years later the Rosicrucians expressed the same doctrine in three famous sentences: In Deo nascimur. From God we are born. In Jesu morimur. In Jesus (the Beloved) we die. Per Spiritum Sanctum revivissimus. In the Holy Spirit we are reborn.

Tauler shared with his audience what he had experienced himself

We are reborn as new, different beings. In this regard we see a direct connection between the Friends of God and the Rosicrucians in the essence of what they stood for. The form of expression is dictated by the specific period; the essence that expresses itself is timeless. The more we examine the essence, the more we recognize it in spite of all the different forms of expression. The Light in us recognizes the Light in how it expressed itself originally. It is transcendental and rises above name and form. Words belong to the mental realm, to what is known. One cannot encapsulate Essence with words. Tauler talked about the "Groundless", from where all experiences of the self and of the world rise and disappear again but which in itself does not belong to this plane of experience, the plane of the self, of the world, but which originates only in God. "From God we are born". Not in this world of time and space. Not in a past, in a body but in a living Present in which everything that is, is the expression of the One. The living spirit lets us experience this mystery, but our minds cannot grasp it or hold it. Or like the Rosicrucians said: The highest thinking is not to think; the highest knowing is not to know.

Eckhart had to justify himself in that he called the believers not servants of God, but friends. To which one of his fellow brothers reacted: 'How dare you to put yourself on one line with the lord our father, our creator?! This is pure heresy and arrogance.'

Towards a new era

But the awakened new man, who died in Jesus according to his old nature and is reborn in the power of the Holy Spirit, knows from within that this new Man is no longer a servant but a Friend of God,

no matter how subservient to world and mankind he or she might be. This understanding made the traditional church lose her power over such a Friend of God. Hence 700 years ago, a new time of Freedom, Equality and Brotherhood had begun. First only in the consciousness of but a few but 400 years later as the result of it also in everyday society.

It will require still more time and effort before this inspiration will truly infuse all layers of society and everyday-life. It must be a completely natural process that grows organically, not an ideal that one can strive for, or a program that can be organized and executed. And where do we find ourselves here and now, in the twenty first century?

Before continuing, let's delve deeper into the whereabouts of this anonymous teacher of Tauler. According to Rudolf Steiner, he was the friend and a predecessor of Christian Rosicross who, like him, incarnated time and again in the centuries that followed to link this new impulse, received in the deepest darkness, to the development of Europe and the western mystery philosophy. Has this new impulse ignited by the Friends of God and the Rosicrucians actually led to a new time, or just to an imitation, a spiritual performance?

The story goes that when Tauler was preparing himself to die, he was nursed in a summer cottage at the monastery in Cologne where his sister also lived. At the time, he asked his Friend of God to pay him a last visit to say farewell. During this visit, Tauler made it clear that his life had changed radically because of the meetings with the Friend of God, and furthermore that he could not claim in any way that the sermons he spoke actu-

We are born from God in a living present and it is an absolute mystery
.....

ally came from him. He clearly felt that it was God who spoke through him; and he felt that was the same for the Friend of God. Everything in his life happened through inspiration. It was God's work, not his own. His part in it was only a selfless servitude.

No Utopia

Let us go back to the Great Friend of God from the Oberland. Does it make sense to hunt down his historical identity in the world of time and space? Although the truth is free from this world, yet it makes a difference how that which is not of this world has manifested in it: it is evidence and a testimony of the supreme. Thereby it is shown that it is possible to realize the true Self in matter. The coming new man is no Utopia nor an ideology, or a mental image. In Christian terms: God loves humanity so deeply that He has allowed his spirit to become his son within us. This is not a unique event of two thousand years or seven hundred years ago. This can happen now in this life in every one of us. Those in which this has happened are the living proof of it.

What does the Friend of God reveal us about himself? We find something about it in a little book he offered in 1377 to the Brotherhood of St. John at the monastery, which he had founded with his friend Rulman Merswin. In this booklet he describes the lives of the five Friends of God who have withdrawn from city life together with a cook. Among them were: a friend from his youth who was a married knight, a Jew who left Prague because of a dream, a cousin who was a monk and was knowledgeable about law and finance, and yet another knight. It was a much-diversified community of men who knew life in the world

very well, but who at a certain moment felt called to begin to live a completely different life. Finally, he says something about himself without going into historical facts. This he did do in another earlier booklet in which he describes his life and the life of his friend from his youth up to their transmutation. But that is a different story that we will not go into here. He sketches in a few pages the process that they went through - dying from their old personality and reborn again in spirit.

'My honourable brothers, I have now discussed in detail the lives of all my brothers and I think you might resent it if I do not speak about myself at all.

That is why I am prepared to do so here but only in a few words because I do not like to talk about myself. And also because I know that several men were bothered by Paul who, they thought, writes too much about himself in his letters about all that he had to endure.

Beloved brothers, you see everywhere in our disastrous time so many nonsensical people who are off track and who live in total confusion. Nevertheless they still show themselves outward as virtuous, successful or as devout people. That is why I warn you and ask you to protect yourself against the world, because the situation is, in many respects, very serious. See, dear brothers, men are already irritated by the words of Paul who was a light in the church and the personification of humbleness. One forgets that he writes thus to his brothers only because Christianity was at its beginning and because it was necessary to do so. He writes therefore out of divine love. In no way did he think of himself but only about the glory of the One. I am convinced that if one had asked him about his intentions at that time – the same way it was done to John the Baptist – he would have answered the same way: "I am not worthy to touch the soles of his sandals."



Dear brothers, at this moment I have faith in humanity. No matter how horrible the present situation: yet have I faith in it. If you would know everything about me, and knew me fully already, still I would write nothing about myself. Know also that I do not write out of my own initiative. Consider these words as coming from God, from where all good originates.

Well dear brothers, because it has to be, I will write the following about myself. Everything that I have told you about the lives of my brothers and everything they had to endure, I have also experienced myself, be it with the help of God. Yet on the other hand – by the mercy of the Holy Spirit – I have known all the supernatural joys, the same way they have. At the beginning of Christianity, inspired by divine love, Paul wrote to help the young church: “I know a man who ascended to the third heaven fourteen years ago, I do not know with or without a body, but God alone knows it.” Dear brothers, it is now my wish to write in this same manner about God’s grace to me and it might irritate you. Yet I believe that, if Paul had still been among us, I would not feel worthy enough to touch the soles of his sandals.

I will describe the way it happened, with the permission of God and out of love for him. “I know a man, who ascended thirty years ago – with or without his body I do not know – only God does.” And when I say that he ascended to the third heaven, without knowing how, but with permission of God, I confirm it is the truth. During this ascension I experienced supernatural wonders and I was filled with great joy which surpasses all understanding and for which there are no words. That is why I can say with Paul: Listen, it is good to be here; and there is nothing more I can say about it. If there are greater joys in the kingdom of God, I have no knowledge of it. Only God knows it.

But I believe that if I had all the knowledge and experiences of all people who have ever lived, they could never rival in the least with the joys that I have experienced during this ecstasy. Yet the time this ecstasy lasted was short and fast.

Dear brothers, during this wonderful ascension, I

was given to understand that during my natural life in this human nature I would have to endure intense suffering. But this did not make me sad and it did not cost me any effort to accept it. Better yet, I even rejoiced over it, because during my ascension I also understood that God does not give suffering to those who are not prepared and able to endure it.

God grants this suffering especially to his best friends, of whom he knows that they are ready to endure this suffering out of love. And God himself is prepared to stand by and to bear the yoke with him on the side that is heaviest.

Most beloved friends, I am afraid that I have written yet too much about myself. Because I never thought that I had to reveal so much about myself, I much prefer that this will only be made known after my death.’

In the Epilogue of this book the following is stated: ‘Know dear brothers, that if it is the will of God that my secret friend (Rulman Merswin) lives longer on this world than I, only then you will know my life in its totality. Because he will ascertain where my life is written down.

And if this happens, he has my permission to reveal my existence and that of my fellow brothers. He needs to decide whether he wants to reveal my name or not. And if it happens that we will be separated from each other and spread to the five corners of Christianity, trust that I will come and visit you.’

In 1382 Rulman Merswin, the most intimate friend of the Great Friend of God, dies in his monastery at the Green Island of Strasbourg. In clearing his belongings several other letters of the Great Friend of God are found. His name, his birth-place or his hermitage in the woods are not mentioned in any of these letters.

As in a puzzle created on purpose, only a few hints are given. For example, two of the five brothers were called John – including the Jew from Prague, who was first called Abraham, but who took the

name John after his conversion to Christianity. Two brothers were called Peter and the fifth was called Knight Lutold. The cook was called Konrad and the intendant, who was also their messenger, was named Rupert. Only first names are mentioned. The hermitage would have been two medieval miles away (roughly 20 kilometres nowadays) from a rather big city near a river and the brothers were led by a dog that walked in front of them until it stood still somewhere and scratched the ground.

In the years after the death of the founder, the Brothers of St. John sought in vain for the place where they hoped to find the Great Friend of God, in particular in Switzerland.

Rudolf Steiner, who absolutely believed in his historical existence, said among friends that those that can fathom who he was and what his role and meaning purported, can also understand why it was important that much of his life should remain secret until the time is ripe for it to become public.

Are we that far already in the twenty first century? Can it be revealed now and what would be the use? Has it any added value at this moment to know about the Great Friend of God and his history? Or is it better to consider it all as in the past and at best a good metaphor? ☸

* The Beguines and the Beghards were Christian lay religious orders that were active in Northern Europe, particularly in the Low Countries in the 13th–16th centuries. Their members lived in semi-monastic communities but did not take formal religious vows

Tango of contradictions

It is not hard to imagine that the field with which we as humans are connected is much larger than city, country, continent or cosmos. A field stretching out for billions of light-years encompassing both visible and invisible areas; continuously moved by tactile as well as imperceptible forces. This field is our life field irradiated by the divine. In this field we, and people like us are in development, but we are but barely aware of our connection to it.

S

Sometimes, e.g. in a local dancehall in Argentina, this field is experienced as dark and warm. Rousing sounds of the bandoneon concertina, violin and piano fire up the couples in a vibrant tango. Everybody is moving in accord with the energy surging through the confined space. On the balcony above the dance floor, the musicians play their hearts out with complete dedication. Exuberant, modest, sensitive, breath taking. They masterly direct the dancers through the limited space.

We are dancing there, too. We twist and swirl around each other, near, far, expressive, modest. Not for one moment losing sight of one another, not for one moment do we let go of each other, for we are one. We are dancing the tango of good and evil, love and hatred, of day and night, from deadly serious to light as a feather. The tango of contradictions.

One minute everything is great. The next moment there is sadness, but we force it into the background. And while we immerse ourselves in the dance, suddenly the wall of the dance hall comes into sight. The music changes, and to your dismay your dance partner takes over the initiative. Powerless you are driven back. Your joy appears imperfect, but also your sorrow is not absolute and after a few intimidated steps backwards, you are able to turn the tide with a disarming turn. And the bandoneon concertina exults.

And we just keep on dancing because we need to move on. How we got there, we do not know. The night progresses and each tango has already been danced so many times. We have experienced every high and every low, each hope, every fear, all continuous contradictions in every fibre of our being. And slowly,

the fatigue is growing. Our movements become less exuberant, the dance slower. And while you reluctantly start your umpteenth tango, the question wells up within you:

“Where is all this leading?”

Then, more or less suddenly, your vision becomes wider. You still dance, yet you suddenly see through the game. This painful game that goes ever on while you finally wonder what is happening outside the dance hall? Is there an outside? Can we escape from this dance that for so long has inexpressibly fascinated us?

And then suddenly you stand



THE WORLD A DANCE PARTY?

A new dance is this, which changes you in every atom and puts you on the path of the star that shines close to the source of your being

outside. You look upwards and see in the bright summer night sky millions of stars above you. A feeling of infinity seizes you.

For a moment you get the overwhelmingly wondrous sensation of seeing into limitless space. And you ask yourself the classic question: 'Is there a limit to this boundlessness too? Is everything visible limited?' The visible and the invisible, the hardest rock and the most refined feeling, man and the gods who generated the universe? If so, then we all live in a separate area, such as our dance hall was. Between its walls we are born and fed, we come to fruition and we die. Between its walls, we dance our tango of contradictions. While doing this we think we are awake, but it is an inebriety. Continuously we let our self be influenced and we hang like puppets on invisible strings of forces that we do not know. Because we all dance we do not see that a level of wakefulness exists in which we are truly able to make choices. Whoever detects even a glimpse of wakefulness is unable to dance with the others any longer and disappears from their sight.

The dance, in which you yourself participate, drags the whole group into choices that a truly awake, conscious human being will not want to make. Will we always keep on dancing? What will happen to us if we cannot stop? Will you be like the dancer who gradu-



ally collapses, loosing his fiery enthusiasm – and yet who must continue, swept along by his routine?

And that life field - that field in which we live, it cares for us like a mother. We are built from its elements and it nourishes us with the fruits from the visible and invisible realms, with matter and radiation power. And thus we are impelled forward. And when we finally lay our heads to rest, the elements dissolve again into building material for yet another appearance. Therefore, it is actually quite remarkable that you entertain desires that go beyond the scope of your life field. You long for unity in a world of duality, for freedom in a world of limitation and for eternity in a world of temporality. You are even chasing immortality. How is that possible? How can we, who are completely made up of the elements of this life field, long for something that absolutely cannot be found here? It is strange that we do not ask this question more often. While notions like perfection, unconditional love and eternity are part of our language, these phenomena cannot be found in the world around us.

It must be because there is something in our being, something that speaks in our deepest essence, from the infinite space beyond our imaginary dance club, from the original life substance, from an original life. You once chose to enter the tense field of the dance hall, and as a consequence had to leave behind all your divinity. The laws of the dance steps of the tango dominate everything in the dance hall. Everything in the dance hall is transitory, because the non-divine will simply always dissolve some time.

For a moment you stand outside all this. And as all of this is going through your mind the light of one particular star

shines right into your eyes. It twinkles and brings the entire universe within you into motion. And now it is your turn! It is your turn, perhaps as temporary personality number ten thousand. The star brings the core into motion, or perhaps the nucleus attracts the light of that one particular star, who can say? But one impulse after another penetrates - suggestion after suggestion from the archaic field. Unity, freedom, love, eternal values, without any opposing force. Affection, kindness, strength, creation - impulses of a new melody. And you hear them! Your predecessors were wholly engrossed in the old dance. Now that you are standing outside, the system is tired of the constant, pointless stirring. The melody of the archaic field begins more and more to penetrate you. First of all it is barely audible and immediately drowned out by the orchestra, but gradually it becomes clearer and clearer. It becomes more insistent until eventually it can no longer be ignored and a new dance begins. A new dance that changes you in every atom – a dance that places you on the path of that lodestar which shines there, close to the source of your being.

Even though you were exhausted, the only thing you need to do now is move along, learn the steps that go with these divine melodies. Dance the new dance! You experience your purest longing for the light from that star which guides you. No more fighting against the forces of this world, no longer powerless and immersed in yet another contradiction, which then inevitably becomes your new dance partner. No matter what the changing conditions are in which we find ourselves, you allow your inner core to determine the movements. And so protective of yourself, the new

melody around you and the lodestar on the horizon, in time your deepest desire will be fulfilled.

When you are finally accustomed to the outside and take a good look around, you will see that there are many like you. Some make their hesitant first turns; others move fluidly on the new rhythm of the cosmic dance floor. 🌟

Working with resistance

What a curious phenomenon resistance is. Who has not experienced its heaviness and its sharp fangs? And moreover the resistance we have against our resistance? But during our entire life, yes the whole world over resistance is a constant factor.

Resistance causes friction and friction gives us our experiences and isn't that what we're here for on earth?

Without friction we cannot develop the strength required to act differently the next time and thus progress in our life. Sometimes one hears people state: 'If only this heavy load were lifted from my back, then Life, or the Path, would open up before me and I would be able to go the distance.' But no, this resistance is the Life, is the Path and when you can fully accept this, then resistance turns into an adventurous experience and can become a very useful instrument for the spiritually oriented.

On the Internet we find that as of this moment there are 65 wars and armed conflicts in the world. The immense inner resistance I feel against this fact, as a Rosicrucian and a world citizen, gives me at the same time a driving motivating force on my Path.

My resistance against the violence, the coarseness and the extremes in books and on TV at the same time acts as a spur for my choice for a clear 'No' against these extremes in my own life.

The resistance against the behaviour of people in my vicinity provides me with a mirror in which I can see reflected my own unmannerliness, or else I would not be so affected by their antics.

These examples show us that the essence of resistance actually means: here I've got some work to do!

Resistance is a gift-wrapped lesson that will again and again be presented to me until I have unwrapped it and accepted it.

In essence the root of resistance lies in the fact that I do not accept what is there. Or that I do not want to be who I am. Do not want to be where I am.

Not accepting reality wastes a lot of energy and promotes turbulence in head and heart, and it is sure that I

will never win this game. Fighting against our resistance only makes it stronger, for 'where attention goes, energy grows.' No wonder then that in his book *The Chinese Gnosis* J. van Rijckenborgh promotes the Wu-Wei, that is 'not-doing', as a means to neutralise the differences between the factual reality and my interpretations of it. Through 'not-doing' another form of consciousness gains dominance and in this way a beginning measure of non-attachment will develop.

With the help of the seismograph of my resistance I am made aware of my weak-points. Seen in this light I am always exactly where I must be. 'Where is the Path? Where I am. Where does the Path lead to? To where I am going. There is no other Way.'

One helpful entrance into working with the value of resistance is looking at the meaning you attach to a situation, to a human being, or an occurrence.

As soon as you remove the 'story,' the meaning, the interpretation, the label you have tied to the plain facts, then

A new dance is this, which changes you in every atom and puts you on the path of the star that shines close to the source of your being

all that remains is just what it is in its simplest essence. Thus life becomes very simple, it is we that make it difficult. For we do not see things as they are, we see things as we are. Resistance is very much an activity of the ego in the sense of: 'something must change in my reality in order to make it more comfortable for me.'

As the Buddha states: 'No ego, no resistance. No resistance, no suffering.'

This does not mean that there will be no trials in your life. It means that while you wend your way through the labyrinth of life you will be able to travel with complete self-surrender to the quiet place in your heart.

Resistance wastes our life force. Surrendering to the heart gives us Energy.



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